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BANGLADESH GENOCIDE AND WORLD PRESS

Compiled and edited by

FAZLUL QUADER QUADERI



BANGLADESH GENOCIDE AND WORLD PRESS

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BANGLA DESH GENOCIDE AND WORLD PRESS

Compiled and Edited By
FAZLUL QUADER QUADERI

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To the People of Bangladesh
Dead or Alive

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I am also grateful to our beloved President Mr. Justice Abu Sayeed Chaudhury who has very kindly provided me with certain rare materials that have been incorporated in this book. A special word of appreciation is also due to Messrs. M.S. Huda and K.A. Gofran who have always inspired me in this venture during those dark days of our national life.

Lastly, I shall fail in my duty if I do not express my gratitude to, and make a mention of the names of the publishing organisations from whose publications very valuable and rare reports have been incorporated in this book. So I express my heartfelt gratitude and indebtedness to all the papers and journals of the world names of which have been shown on the back-cover of the book.

PREFACE

The world, in recent past, has witnessed mass killing with all its brutalities and ruthlessness, but the terror and orgies unleashed by the barbarous hordes of Yahya-Bhutto clique upon the unarmed, innocent people of Bangladesh since the night of March 25, 1971 have surpassed all records in their ferocity and intensity.

This book has endeavoured to bring to its readers a documentary evidence of how the world press and world opinion reacted on these tragic happenings in Bangladesh. The unprecedented blood bath, the indomitable will that worked behind the struggle for liberation; the sacrifices, torments, agonies and patient sufferings of the people; their faith and conviction, their heroism and courage that led to final victory and glory—all these in the form of a terrible storm swept over Bangladesh and touched the distant shores of the world. The book offers a chronological record of those dark days that once filled the pages of foreign papers and journals, and found an echo in the lurid accounts of correspondents, in processions, demonstrations and speeches of the peace-loving people of the world. This compiled work will also indicate the reaction of different countries of the world at diplomatic level and the way they viewed this genocide perpetrated by the Pakistan army and their collaborators and also the struggle by the freedom-fighters for an independent Bangladesh.

I feel to say a few more words on this compilation. It was very difficult, almost impossible, to have in the Occupied Zone of Bangladesh any foreign newspaper or journal in which reports and articles appeared on the people of Bangladesh, their tragedy and their fight for liberation. The Pakistan Government had put an embargo on the import of these informative materials and their circulation in any manner was banned. The Foreign Missions, also were debarred from distributing even parts of these news items among the public and were placed under strict censorship. Inspite of these restrictions imposed on news media a few of us including our journalist friends started collecting materials, what-

ever could be smuggled into Bangladesh since April, 1971. Not merely newspapers and journals, some of my friends in the diplomatic missions were able to provide me with a few of the "Classified Reports". Many of us here were very eager to find out the attitude of the U.S. Government towards this genocide and the liberation struggle in Bangladesh. We were able to collect the news items from the press section of the U. S. Mission—the wireless file and R.T.T. file. The secret report on the army crackdown on 25th March, 1971 sent to Washington by Mr. Arthur K. Blood, the then U.S. Consul-General at Dacca also reached our hand. All these reports have also been incorporated in this book.

I undertook this project at a great risk and on several occasions some of us were suspected and about to be taken. In fact, three of my friends, Nazmul Huq, Nizamuddin Ahmed and Sirajuddin Hussain have been brutally killed by the fanatic elements of the Al-Badar just on the eve of our long-cherished independence. Had the Pakistanis not surrendered on the 16th December, 1971 probably, we would not have survived to compile this book. These papers and documents regularly acquired by us, were in no way less dangerous than possession of firearms and explosives. Immediately after we received these papers we typed out several copies and at times we had to take photographs of those. In the safe vault of a local bank one such copy was carefully preserved in secret. The other copies were distributed among the fighting people of the occupied zone. The main purpose was to keep them informed of the world opinion and boost up their morale and inspire them to carry on the struggle until final victory. A number of these collected materials were earlier published in the cyclostyled editions of Guerrilla bulletins.

In the end I would like to add that this compiled work is not a complete book by itself. I could not, of course, collect all the papers and journals of the world which focused our struggle for liberation. Yet I hope that our readers and other who will research on this unparalleled genocide and inhuman torture will be able to assess their extent and at the same time get to know the trend of events of that time and the heat expressed by the world conscience. It is only then my labours will be amply recompensed.

October 22, 1972 **Fazlul Quader Quaderi.**

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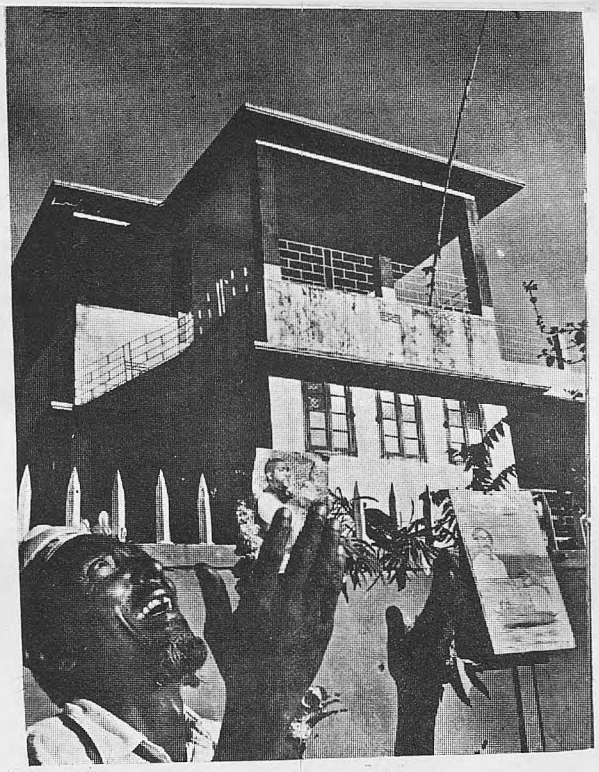
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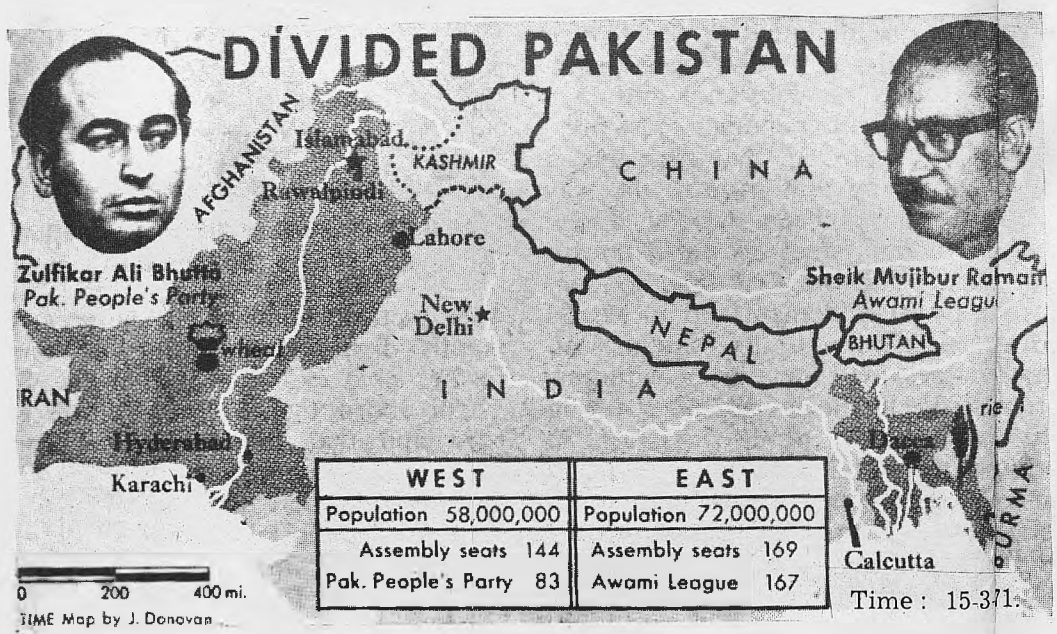
আমার সোনার বাংলা, আমি তোমায় ভালবাসি।
চিরদিন তোমার আকাশ, তোমার বাতাস, আমার প্রাণে বাজায় বাঁশি।
ওমা, ফাগুনে তোর আমের বনে ঘ্রাণে পাগল করে,
মরি হায়, হায়রে,—
ওমা, অঘ্রানে তোর ভরা ক্ষেতে আমি কি দেখেছি মধুর হাসি॥
কী শোভা, কী ছায়া গো, কী স্নেহ, কী মায়া গো—
কী আচল বিছায়েছ বটের মূলে, নদীর কূলে কূলে।
মা, তোর মুখের বাণী আমার কানে লাগে সুধার মত,
মরি হায়, হায়রে,—
মা, তোর বদন খানি মলিন হলে, ওমা, আমি নয়ন জলে ভাসি॥



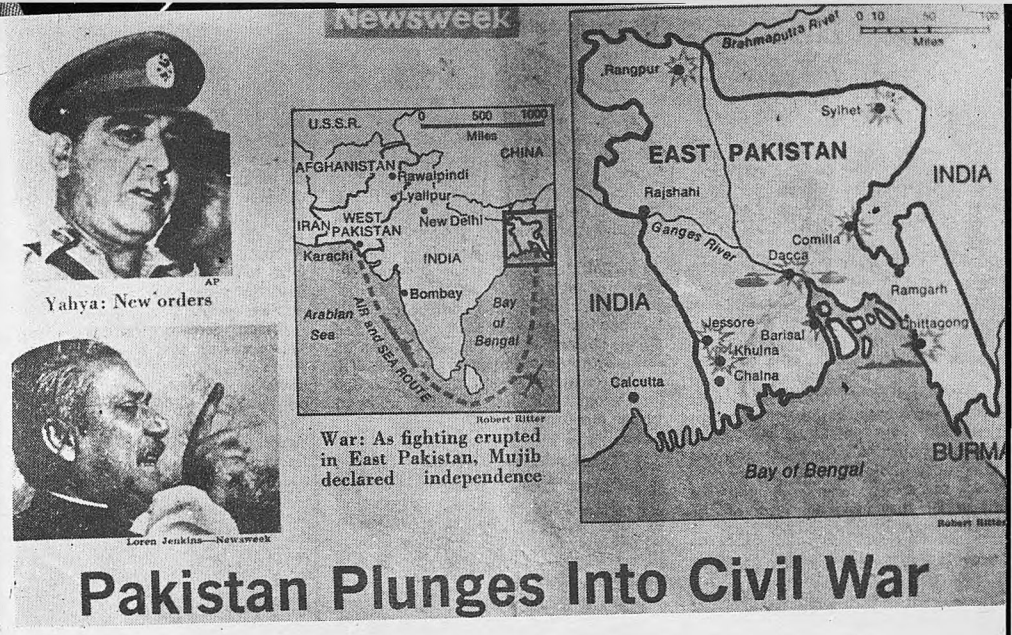
"I can smile even in hell"—the Sheikh in a Press Conference on 24-3-71.
Courtesy : Gana Kantha.



A follower of Sheikh invokes Allah's blessings on the captive leader in front of house.
Photo : Kishor Parekh.



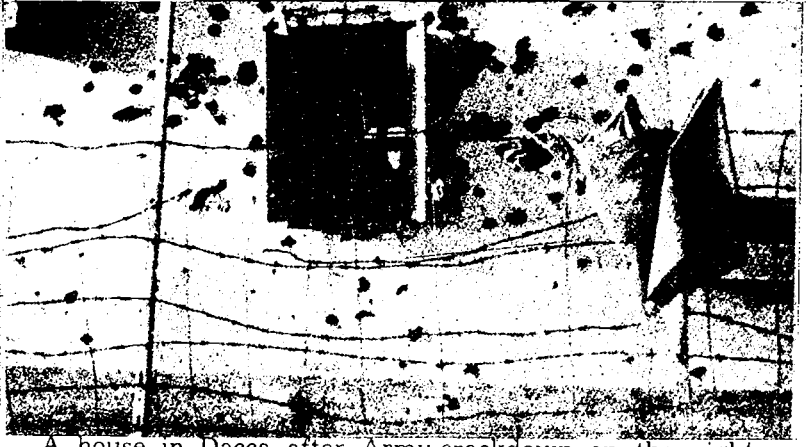
Time : 15-3-71.



Newsweek : 5-4-71.



Death in Dacca : the Army went in with lists of wanted teachers.



A house in Dacca after Army-crackdown on the night of 25th March, 1971.



West Pakistani tank near "The People" office. Time: 12-4-71.

TIME Magazine March 15, 1971.

PAKISTAN

JINNAH'S FADING DREAM

If we begin to think of ourselves as Bengalis, Punjabis and Sindhis first, and Moslems and Pakistanis only incidentally, then Pakistan is bound to disintegrate.

—Mohammed Ali Jinnah, 1948

The blood was still flowing from the murderous communal clashes that followed the 1947 partition of the Indian subcontinent when Pakistan's founder gave voice to that fear. Last week blood flowed again as the world's fifth most populous nation (130 million), divided between a wheat-growing West with tall, light-skinned people and a rice growing East with short dark-skinned people, moved ominously toward a break-up—or a civil war.

The man behind the impending split is Sheikh Mujibur ("Mujib") Rahman, the unchallenged political leader of the more populous, poverty-striken eastern segment. "Pakistan, as it stands today, is finished," Mujib told TIME Correspondent Dan Coggin in Dacca last week. "There is no longer any hope of a settlement." He urged that East and West Pakistan adopt separate constitutions, and that his followers refuse to pay taxes to the central government, which is situated in the West. He seemed on the brink of an outright declaration of independence for what he calls Bangla Desh (Bengal State) which would become the world's eighth most populous nation. If Mujib should make such an announcement, open warfare might well erupt between the East Pakistan and the estimated 60,000 army troops mostly Westerners, in their midst.

Poles Apart

The crisis is an extension of the rioting over the central government's neglect of East Pakistan that helped force President Mohammed Ayub Khan to resign two years ago. Ayub's successor, authoritarian but fairminded General Agha

Mohammed Yahya Khan, held out hope that the long subservient East would have a greater voice in running the country. Last December, he held elections for a Constituent Assembly that would draft a new constitution—Pakistan's fourth since 1947. Yahya thought Sheikh Mujib and his restive Awami League would win perhaps 60% of the East's allotment of 169 seats in the 313-seat Constituent Assembly. The remaining East Pakistan delegates, Yahya figured, would align themselves with West Pakistani parties and prevent Mujib from winning majority control over the entire country. But in a stunning victory that amounted to a vote for wide-ranging autonomy, if not outright independence, Mujib's Awami League won 167 of the 169 seats and an overall majority in the Assembly.

Strengthened by the mandate, Mujib pressed a six-point program demanding that East Pakistan handle its own taxation, foreign trade and foreign aid, thereby bringing an end to the West's longtime dominance. Mujib accuses West Pakistan, with 58 million people, of taking 70% of the nation's foreign aid and 70% of its imports, and of monopolising 85% of the central bureaucracy and 90% of the army. By contrast, the more populous East Pakistan, with 72 million people, remains one of the world's most densely populated regions (1,400 per sq. mi.), one of the poorest ($50 per capita income a year), and one of the most disaster-prone (last year's Ganges Delta cyclone killed as many as 500,000 East Pakistanis).

In West Pakistan, ex-Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and his Pakistan People's Party emerged as the strongest force, capturing 83 of 144 seats. Bhutto 43, and Mujib 48, are poles apart. Son of a wealthy feudal landowning family, Bhutto is pro-Chinese and anti-Indian; Mujib product of a middle-class village family, is pro-Western and would like to make peace with India. More important, most of West Pakistan's capitalists, bureaucrats and army officers support Bhutto, who opposes Mujib's six points because they would destroy Pakistan's unity and his own ambitions.

Following the December elections, Mujib twice turned down Yahya's invitations to confer in Islamabad, the national capital located in the West. Yahya went to Dacca, the capital of East Pakistan, and so did Bhutto. They got nowhere with Mujib, who warned stiffly that the minority would no longer rule the majority.

To Their Knees

Two days before the Constituent Assembly was set to convene in Dacca last week, Yahya postponed it idefinitely to give the political leaders a chance to reach an understanding. The postponement infuriated the Bengalis. "I am not imposing the six-point program on West Pakistan," declared Mujib, "but the people of Bangla Desh are entitled to it, and they will have it." In protest Mujib called an all day general strike for the following day, and half-day strikes for the rest of the week, shuttering offices, shops and factories and halting trains, planes and even rickshaws. Angry mobs carrying bamboo staves, the weapon Mujib prescribes, roared **"Joi Bangla"** (Victory to Bengal) through Dacca's seamy streets. At least 25 died in Dacca in clashes with soldiers; another 100 were killed at the port city of Chittagong. Mujib denounced the army shooting as an "unforgivable sin" and warned: "There will be civil war if they do not withdraw."

At week's end Yahya Khan announced in a radio broadcast that the Constituent Assembly would be convened after all on March 25. "As long as I am in command of the armed forces, I will ensure the complete and absolute integrity of Pakistan." Nevertheless, it seemed doubtful that Yahya's decision to convene the assembly would pacify Mujib. Two days earlier, the East Pakistan leader said to the West Pakistanis: "I will break them and bring them to their knees." After such a statement, an outright declaration of independence could be little more than an anticlimax.

THE OBSERVER (London) March 28, 1971

RUSSIA MAY RECOGNISE BANGLA DESH

By Dev Murarka

SOVIET opinion is rapidly shifting in favour of recognising East Bengal as a separate State.

Though Moscow does not propose to make any rash move, it increasingly feels that recognition by the Big Powers as early as possible is the only way to stop the slaughter in the Pakistan civil war.

Recognition of Bangla Desh, as East Pakistan wants to call herself, will take away the legal right of the West Pakistan Government to intervene there. It will open the way for some form of international protection to be accorded to East Bengal and save it from further harassment by the military forces of General Yahya Khan, the Pakistan President.

Soviet recognition, however, will depend upon several factors—first and foremost the East Bengalis' ability to sustain their resistance to West Pakistan, with or without the presence of the rebel leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. It may be delayed, too, if Yahya shows any sign of making a new bid to undo the damage already done. But Yahya's stock here has now fallen very low. Moscow will also watch for the political moves made by other Big Powers.

Russians are keenly aware that their political interests and economic ties are, for the most part, with West Pakistan. But they do not want to be a party to the West Pakistani suppression of East Bengal, especially if the issue is raised at any international forum. They would still prefer a united Pakistan. They have evidently concluded that a United Pakistan is, for all practical purposes, dead. Even if by some miracle it survives, it will be united in name only and held together with bayonets.

Sheikh Calls For Help

by our Foreign Staff

CONFLICTING reports came out of Pakistan yesterday about the whereabouts of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader of the Bengali revolt.

The official Pakistan radio said he had been seized in his suburban home in Dacca and was in custody.

Then a broadcast was picked up in India purporting to be by the Sheikh. It said: 'I am in Chittagong and as free as Bangla Desh'— the name he gave to East Pakistan when he declared it independent on Friday.

Chittagong, East Pakistan's main seaport, is reported to be in the hands of Sheikh Mujibur's Awami League now organised into 'liberation fighters.' It is the landing point for

Pakistan troops making the long journey round the tip of India from West Pakistan to reinforce the two divisions, Pakistan's President General Yahya Khan, already has in action in the East. The town is said to be under attack by bombers and tanks.

The broadcast said to be by the Sheikh came from a transmitter calling itself Free Bengal Revolutionary Radio.

The speaker said: "Tanks and bombs will not crush the spirit of the people of Bangla Desh." He urged his followers to seek out the 'infiltrators from West Pakistan' and to destroy them. He ended with a cry of '**Jai Bangla**!'—'Victory to Bengal'!

The Revolutionary Radio also put out an appeal for help to the United Nations. It sent a similar appeal to all countries —'especially those neighbouring Bangla Desh'—to help the freedom movement in East Pakistan.

The only neighbouring countries capable of responding are India—which has a level and barely defensible frontier with East Pakistan running northward from Calcutta to the Cooch Behar corridor—and Communist China, whose Liberation Army has units poised along the high frontier of Tibet, little more than 100 miles away, up the massive staircase of the Himalayas.

Because of total censorship, all news coming out of East Pakistan is limited, sketchy and probably unrealiable. One news agency has put the first day's death toll at 10,000.

But Radio Pakistan said there was no foundation for reports of heavy fighting in East Pakistan. It claimed the situation throughout the province was fast returning to normal.

But in spite of these doubts, the reaction of India's Parliament has been sharp and strongly in favour of aid for East Bengal. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, hinted strongly at the possibility of Indian intervention.

She said : 'We welcome the democratic action of an entire people who have spoken with one voice'—a reference to last December's election in which East Pakistan voted almost unanimously for Sheikh Mujibur and his Awami League's policy of almost total autonomy.

Mrs. Gandhi added : "The Indian Government is fully alive to the situation and will take a decision at the appropriate

time. We must not talk in purely theoretical terms but fact is that an unarmed people have been met with tanks."

The Prime Minister's statement came after an excited House had reacted with displeasure against a speech by the Foreign Minister, Mr. Swaran Singh, in which he had evidently tried to cool things down. He said his Government hoped that even at this stage, Pakistan would be able to 'resume democratic processes.'

Basing his report on Press accounts, the Foreign Minister said that more than two divisions of the Pakistan Army were 'deployed in suppressing the people of East Pakistan,' and added: 'Our hearts go out in sympathy to the people there who are undergoing great suffering.'

Mr. Krishna Menon, the former Defence Minister, urged that India should immediately invoke the provisions of the Genocide Convention. He also hoped that if the new Government of Bangla Desh asked for recognition, India would give it.

Meanwhile, General Sam Manekshaw, Chief of the Indian Army has hurriedly returned to Delhi from a visit to Poona.

However dubious, some of the reports now being put out chiefly by Indian news agencies, there can be little doubt that East Pakistan is in the grip of a massive upheaval. So far as any general picture emerges, it seems that, while street fighting is occurring in Dacca, the main conflicts with the Army are centred on town close to the Indian border and along the main route to Chittagong.

These are plainly the points where the main concentrations of General Yahya's forces are likely to be—down the western side of the country against the possibility of Indian intervention and along lines of communication with Chittagong, the only source of heavy reinforcement.

At Jessore, a mass of Awami League fighters, wearing only sarongs and armed with spears and daggers, are reported trying to take over the airport.

The East Pakistan Rifles and the Bengali police are said to have joined the uprising on the Sheikh's side.

The most dramatic single incident is reported from Dacca. An Awami League mob is said to have attacked the residence

of Lieutenant-General Tikka Khan, General Yahya's chief Military Law Administrator in East Pakistan, and killed him. General Tikka was despatched to the East earlier this month, when Sheikh Mujib proclaimed his immensely successful civil disobedience campaign. The President's intention was that General Tikka should be appointed Governor of the Province, but patriotic East Bengal judges refused to swear him in.

All this time, Radio Pakistan has been sedulously putting out the impression that President Yahya's military government is in full control. New military law and regulations are being regularly broadcast, ordering people to return to their work and threatening them with arrest if they fail. The radio also announced a lifting of the curfew for nine hours of daylight today and said that Press reporters were being exempted from curfew at all times.

More than 600 Britons are still in East Pakistan and the High Commission offices in Dacca are said to be out of touch with them. British women and children were evacuated some time ago. Those remaining are chiefly male members of the High Commission staff, businessmen and planters.

The Australian Government has ordered the immediate evacuation of all Australian women and children. They are the families of Colombo Plan experts and of missionaries.

A report from Calcutta says that 200 East Pakistanis crossed into India yesterday, across the West Bengal frontier, to escape from the Pakistan Army. They include the women and children and led the Indian authorities to fear a flood of refugees might follow.

In New Delhi, four MPs from Mrs. Gandhi's Congress Party headed a demonstration of more than 1,000 Indians to the Pakistan High Commission, where they burned pictures of General Yahya and Tikka Khan and shouted demands for an end to aggression in East Pakistan.

According to Radio Pakistan, General Yahya's Government has lodged a strong protest with India against its 'blatant and deliberate interference in Pakistan's internal affairs.' No indication was given of the form this interference has taken.

How Mujibur Turned Into Bengal's Hero

By **Cyril Dunn**

ALTHOUGH it has taken Sheikh Mujibur Rahman more than 20 years to bring his life to its present stunning climax the 'liberation' of his homeland, East Pakistan, from its status as 'a colony' of West Pakistan has always been his aim. Whatever may be said against him, he is not a political opportunist.

As a boy he sometimes threw stones at the police of the British Raj. But he was never, in the true Indian sense, a freedom fighter against the British, whose political institutions he admires.

His considerable energy has always been directed towards winning internal freedoms—for the Muslims against Hindu dominance in India and then for East Bengal against the Punjabis and Pathans of the west.

The Sheikh belongs to East Bengal; he is not one of the countless refugees who fled from India into Pakistan at the time of partition in 1947. He was born in 1919 at a village called Tongipara, in the Faridpur district, west of Dacca. His family were middle-class land-owners. He matriculated from a mission school at Gopalganj and went on to university in Calcutta—the sole link with West Bengal. This was in 1942 and at that point he was already married.

Pakistan was less than a year old when Mujib—as everyone calls him—began fighting for Bengali nationalism. Then a law student at Dacca University, he started organising student demonstrations against Urdu as the official language of all Pakistan and in favour of Bengali. To this end he founded the East Pakistan Students' League, a body which was later to play a major and violent role in the overthrow of President Ayub Khan.

For these activities Mujib was expelled from the university and spent six days in jail—the first in a series of imprisonments all imposed by the Pakistani authorities. As soon as he got out he began to organise strikes in support of the underprivileged workers of East Bengal. For 'criminal activities,' about the exact nature of which he is now rather

vague, he was sent back to prison, this time for two and a half years.

While he was there the flamboyant and politically gifted Suhrawardy, the last Chief Minister of united Bengal, became disillusioned with the dominant Pakistan party, the Muslim League, and formed the Awami League. The Sheikh was elected secretary of the new party while he was still in jail.

His ministerial experience is slight. He went into the East Pakistan Assembly after the 1954 provincial election, in which the Bengalis obliterated the Muslim League. He was given a couple of Ministries during his term, but was always essentially a party organiser.

He was a driving spirit behind the mass meeting in Dacca in 1953, and behind the formal resolution passed three years later by the East Pakistan Assembly, both of which demanded precisely the kind of almost total autonomy for East Bengal which has now brought Pakistan to the point of breaking in two.

As soon as Ayub Khan seized power in 1958 he identified the Sheikh as an important enemy threatening what the President called the 'integrity of Pakistan'. The Sheikh was one of the first to be jailed under the dictator's Public Safety Ordinance and was held without trial for a year and a half.

In 1961, he followed Suhrawardy's brave example and refused to give Ayub an undertaking—readily obtained from most of Pakistan's other politicians—not to engage in politics for five years. The Sheikh then went inside for another six months.

Released again, he dedicated himself more vehemently than ever to the liberation of Bengal. In a country almost universally cowed by the rigours of the dictatorship, he behaved with startling courage. He went about East Pakistan delivering one 'seditious' speech after another.

Repeatedly arrested, he used his brief spells of liberty when out on bail to speak with the utmost recklessness to foreign newspaper correspondents about the colonial subjection of East Bengal and his determination to end it. On these occasions he was always immensely cheerful and was plainly

supported by the belief that the mass of the Bengalis were behind him.

Ayub applied sterner measures. Emerging in January 1968 from another brief spell of detention, the Sheikh was seized by soldiers taken off to the Kurmitola Cantonment and held there in solitary confinement for five months. Nobody outside the regime knew where he was. Then he was formally brought to trial, with 35 others, in the Agartala conspiracy case. It was alleged against them that led by the Sheikh, they had conspired with Indian accomplices to organise a mutiny in East Pakistan military forces and then overthrow the Ayub regime.

As a result of this trial Mujib's popularity in East Bengal soared. Until then inspite of his many activities he was not considered a major leader. The trial made him a Bengali national hero. His release was a main demand shouted by the students mobs whose destructive violence brought about the collapse of Ayub, and under this pressure the trial was abandoned.

Meanwhile, back in 1966 the Sheikh had produced his Six-Point Programme, a detailed elaboration on the call for East Bengal autonomy first raised at the Dacca mass meeting in 1953. It is in defence of these points that the Sheikh now confronts General Yahya Khan, Ayub's successor as military ruler, and exchange with him 'the language of weapons.'

In spite of this dramatic background, the Sheikh is not in any sense a wild man, though he can readily rouse the people with his oratory. Talking to foreign newspapermen, and pulling on the Wilsonian pipe he affects, he sounds no more exciting than any leader of the present British Labour Party, whose aims he professes to admire.

He is tall and quite handsome, with a slight resemblance in profile to Stalin. He has five children, lives in a suburb of Dacca with no conspicuous signs of wealth, and should make a solidly sensible political leader, if he ever gets the chance and if the politics of Pakistan ever settle down.

DAILY TELEGRAPH (London) Tuesday, March 30, 1971

[*Simon Dring, Daily Telegraph reporter, flew into Dacca on March 6, as the political tension built up in East Pakistan.*

Dring, aged 26 describes how he eluded search parties that expelled foreign correspondents and stayed on to bring this first-hand account of the fighting out of the stricken state.

He left Dacca at the weekend and filed this report from Bangkok:

As the Pakistani Army moved in force into Dacca last week to crush Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's 25 day old independence movement all foreign journalists in East Pakistan, confined at gunpoint in the Intercontinental Hotel since the beginning of the fighting, were rounded up and deported to Karachi.

However, I evaded the round-up by hiding on the roof of the hotel. Then despite repeated attempts by the Army to find me and the only other foreign newsman to escape the net, Associated Press photographer Michel Laurent, I managed to make an extensive tour of the burning city and to see first-hand the extent of the slaughter the Government of Pakistan is trying to hide.

I succeeded in getting on a plane to West Pakistan yesterday, missing a check by security men by minutes, and although I was twice stripped and my baggage thoroughly searched, got through with my notes intact to Bangkok to file my report.]

TANKS CRUSH REVOLT IN PAKISTAN

7,000 Slaughtered: Homes burned

BY SIMON DRING in Bangkok, who was in Dacca during the fighting—In the name of "God and a united Pakistan," Dacca is today a crushed and frightened city.

After 24 hours of ruthless, cold-blooded shelling by the Pakistan Army as many as 7,000 people are dead, large areas have been levelled and East Pakistan's fight for independence has been brutally put to an end.

Despite claims by President Yahya Khan, head of the country's military government, that the situation is now calm tens of thousands of people are fleeing to the countryside, the city streets are almost deserted and the killings are still going on in other parts of the province.

But there is no doubt that troops supported by tanks control the towns and major population centres and that resistance is minimal and so far ineffective.

Even so people are still being shot at the slightest provocation, and buildings are still being indiscriminately destroyed.

And the military appears to be more determined each day to assert its control over the 73 million Bengalees in the East wing.

It is impossible accurately to assess what all this has so far cost in terms of innocent human lives. But reports beginning to filter in from the outlying areas, Chittagong, Comilla and Jessore put the figure, including Dacca, in the region of 15,000 dead.

Only the horror of the military action can be properly gauged—the students dead in their beds, the butchers in the markets killed behind their stalls, the women and children roasted alive in their houses, the Pakistanis of Hindu religion taken out and shot 'en masse' the bazaars and shopping areas razed by fire and the Pakistani flag that now flies over every building in the capital.

Military casualties are not known but at least two soldiers have been wounded and one officer killed.

The Bengali uprising seems to be well and truly over for the moment. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was seen being taken away by the Army and nearly all the top members of his Awami League party have also been arrested.

Armoured Attack

Leading political activists have been taken in, others have been murdered and the offices of two newspapers which supported the Sheikh's movement have been destroyed.

But the first target as the tanks rolled into Dacca on the night of the 25th was the students.

An estimated three battalions of troops were used in the attack on Dacca—one armoured, one artillery and one infantry. They started leaving the barracks shortly before 10 p.m.

By 11 p.m. firing had broken out and the people who had started hastily erecting makeshift barricades—overturned cars, trees stumps, furniture, concrete piping—became early casualties as the troops rolled into town.

Sheikh Mujib was telephoned and warned that something was happening, but he refused to leave his house. "If I go into hiding they will burn the whole of Dacca to find me," he told an aide who escaped arrest.

200 Students Killed.

The students were also warned but those who were still around later said that most thought they would only be arrested.

Led by American supplied M24 World War II tanks, one column of troops sped to Dacca University shortly after midnight. Troops took over the British Council library and used it as a fire-base to shell nearby dormitory areas.

Caught completely by surprise, some 200 students were killed in Iqbal Hall, headquarters of the militantly anti-government students' union, as shells slammed into the building and their rooms were sprayed with machine-gun fire.

Two days later bodies were still smouldering in their burnt out rooms, others were scattered outside and more floated in a nearby lake. An art student lay sprawled across his easel.

Seven teachers died in their quarters and a family of 12 were gunned down as they hid in an out-house.

The military removed many of the bodies, but the 30 still there could never have accounted for all the blood in the corridors of Iqbal Hall.

At another hall the dead were buried by the soldiers in a hastily-dug mass grave and then bulldozed over by tanks.

People living near the university were caught in the fire too and 200 yards of shanty houses running alongside a railway line were destroyed.

Army patrols also razed a nearby market area, running down between the stalls, killing their owners as they slept. Two days later, when it was possible to get out and see all this, some of the men were still lying as though asleep, their blankets pulled up over their shoulders.

In the same district the Dacca Medical College received direct bazooka fire and a mosque was badly damaged.

Police H.Q. Attacked.

As the university came under attack columns of troops moved in on the Rajarbag headquarters of the East Pakistan police on the other side of the city.

Tanks opened fire first and then the troops moved in and levelled the men's sleeping quarters, firing incendiary rounds into the buildings.

It was not known, even by people living opposite how many died, but out of the 1,100 police based there, not many are believed to have escaped.

As this was going on other units had surrounded the Sheikh's house. When contacted shortly before 1 a.m. he was expecting an attack any minute and that he had sent everyone except his servants and a bodyguard away to safety.

A neighbour said that at 1.10 a.m. one tank, an armoured car and trucks loaded with troops drove down the street firing over the house.

"Sheikh you should come down," an officer called out in English as they stopped outside.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman replied by stepping out on to his balcony and saying "Yes. I am ready but there is no need to fire ; all you need to have done was call me on the telephone and I would have come".

The officer then walked into the garden of the house and told the Sheikh: "You are arrested."

He was taken away, along with three servants, an aide and his bodyguard who was badly beaten up when he started to insult the officer.

Documents Taken.

As he was driven off—presumably to Army headquarters the soldiers moved into the house, took away all documents, smashed everything in sight, locked the garden gate, shot down green, red and yellow "Bangladesh" (Free Bengal) flag and drove away.

By 2 a.m. on the 26th fires were burning all over the city. Troops had occupied the university and surrounding areas and were busy killing off students still in hiding and replacing independence flags with Pakistani national standards.

There was still heavy shelling in some areas but the fighting was noticeably beginning to slacken. Opposite the Intercontinental Hotel, a platoon of troops, stormed the empty offices of Dacca's 'People' newspaper, burning it down along with most houses in the area and killing a lone night-watchman.

Shortly before dawn most firing had stopped and as the sun came up an eerie silence settled over the city, deserted and completely dead except for the noise of the crows and the occasional convoy of troops.

But the worst was yet to come. At midday, again without any warning, columns of troops poured into the old section of the city where more than a million people live in a sprawling maze of narrow, winding streets.

For the next 11 hours they proceeded systematically to devastate large areas of the old town, where Sheikh Mujib had some of his strongest support among the people in Dacca.

English Road, French Road, Niar Bazaar, City Bazaar meaningless names but home to thousand of people were burnt to the ground.

"They suddenly appeared at the end of the street" said one old man living in the French Road-Niar Bazaar area. "Then they drove down it firing into all the houses."

The leading unit was followed by soldiers carrying cans of petrol. Those who tried to escape were shot. Those who stayed were burnt alive. About 700 men, women and children died there that day between midday and two o'clock.

The same was repeated in at least three other areas, all of them covering anything up to half a square mile or more.

As they left the soldiers took those dead they could away with them in trucks and moved on to their next target. Police station in the old town were also attacked.

'I am looking for my constables," a Police Inspector said on Saturday morning as he wandered through the ruins of one of the bazaars. 'I have 240 in my district and so far I have found only 30 of them—all dead."

One of the biggest massacres of the entire operation in Dacca took place in the Hindu area of the old town. There the soldiers made the people come out of their houses and then just shot them in groups. This area, too, was eventually razed.

The troops stayed on in the old city in force until about 11 p.m. on the 26th driving about with local Bengali informers.

The soldiers would fire a flare and the informer would point out the houses of staunch Awami League supporters. The house would then be destroyed—either with direct tank or recoilless rifle fire or with a can of petrol.

Meanwhile, troops of the East Bengal Regiment were being used in the suburbs, to start moving out towards the industrial areas of the city—Tongi and Narayanganj—against centres of Leftist support for the Sheikh.

Firing continued in these areas until early on Sunday morning but the main bulk of the operation in the city was completed by the night of the 26th—almost exactly 24 hours after it began.

One of the last targets was the Bengali language daily newspaper 'Ittefaq'. Over 400 people had taken shelter in its offices when the fighting started.

At 4 o'clock on the afternoon of the 26th four tanks appeared in the road outside. By 4.30 p.m. the building was an inferno. By Saturday morning only the charred remains of corpses were left.

As quickly as they appeared the troops disappeared off the streets. On Saturday morning the radio announced the curfew would be lifted from 7 a.m. until 4 p.m.

It then repeated the Martial Law Regulations banning all political activity, announcing Press censorship and ordering all Government employees to report back for work and for all privately-owned weapons to be handed in.

Thousands Flee

Magically the city returned to life and panic set in. By 10 a.m., with palls of black smoke still hanging over large areas of the old town and out in the distance towards the industrial areas, the streets were packed with fleeing people.

By car, in rickshaw but mostly on foot carrying their possessions with them the people of Dacca were leaving. By midday they were on the move in their tens of thousands.

"Please give me a lift, I'm an old man," "In the name of Allah help me." "Take my children with you," came the pleas.

Silent and unsmiling they passed and saw what the Army had done. It had been a thorough job, carefully planned and meticulously executed and they looked the other way and kept on walking.

Down near one of the markets a shot was heard. Within second 2,000 people were running, but it had only been someone going to join the queues already forming to hand in their weapons.

The Government offices remained almost empty. Most employees were leaving for their villages.

Those who were not fleeing wandered aimlessly around the smoking debris of what were once their homes, lifting the blackened, twisted sheets of corrugated iron used in most shanty areas as roofing materials to save what they could from the ashes.

Nearly every other car, if it was not taking people out into the countryside, was flying a Red Cross and convoying dead and wounded to the hospitals.

And in the middle of it all occasional convoys of troops would appear, the soldiers peering unsmiling down the muzzles of their guns at the silent crowds.

On the Friday night as they pulled back to their barracks they shouted "Narai Tukbir", an old Arabic war cry meaning "We have won the war."

On Saturday when they spoke it was to shout "Pakistan Zindabad", "Long live Pakistan".

Most people took the hint. Before the curfew was re-imposed the national flag of Pakistan, apart from petrol, was the hottest selling item on the market.

As if to protect their property in their absence, the last thing a family would do before they locked up their house would be to raise the flag.

At four o'clock the streets emptied again, the troops reappeared and silence fell once more over Dacca.

But firing broke out again almost immediately. "Anybody out of doors after four will be shot," the radio had announced.

A small boy running across the street outside the Intercontinental two minutes after curfew was stopped, slapped four times in the face by an officer and taken away in a jeep.

Another unfortunate night-watchman, this time at the Dacca Club, a leftover bar from the colonial days, was shot when he went to shut the gate of the club.

A group of Hindu Pakistanis living around a temple in the middle of the racecourse were all killed, apparently for no reason at all except they were out in the open.

And refugees who came back into the city when they found roads leading out were blocked by the Army told how many had been killed as they tried to walk across country to avoid the troops.

Beyond those roadblocks is more or less a no man's land, where the clearing operations are still going on. What is happening out there is anybody's guess—except the Army's.

Many people took to the river to try to escape the crowds on the roads. But they ran the risk of being left stranded waiting for a boat when curfew fell.

Where one such group was sitting on Saturday afternoon, there were only bloodstains next morning.

"Traitors" Charge

Hardly anywhere was there evidence of organised resistance to the troops in Dacca or anywhere else in the province. Even the West Pakistani officers scoffed at the idea of anybody putting up a fight.

"These men," said one Punjabi lieutenant, "could not kill us if they tried."

"Things are much better now," said another officer. "Nobody can speak out or come out. If they do we will kill them. They have spoken enough. They are traitors and we are not. We are fighting in the name of God and a united Pakistan."

The operation, apparently planned and led by Gen. Tikka Khan, the West Pakistani military governor of the East, has succeeded in driving every last drop of resistance out of the people of Bengal.

Only the propaganda machine of the Indian Government is keeping the fight going apart from a Leftist underground group operating a clandestine "Bangla Desh" radio somewhere outside Dacca.

Even if time erases the scars that marks the end of the dream that the people of East Pakistan thought was democratically theirs, it will take more than a generation before they live down the fear instilled in their minds by the tragic and horrifying massacres of last week.

If anything is to be salvaged from the ruins of Sheikh Mujib's movement, it is the realisation that the Army is not to be under-estimated again and that for all the speech-making of President Yahya about the returning of power to the people, the regime did not really ever intend to abide by the results of any election—fairly won or not.

THE WEEKLY ECONOMIST (London) April 3, 1971.

UNITY AT GUNPOINT

East Pakistan's Sheikh Mujib looks a loser today, but it is more likely that President Yahya has chosen the road that leads to a civil war he cannot win.

President Yahya has taken desperate action. He has chosen to break the deadlock about Pakistan's future by breaking Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his Awami League. No one thought he would dare to try, and still less that he would succeed. But now it seems the army, after its sharp and bloody takeover, has the upper hand. The reports from foreign journalists whom the army failed to expel quickly enough show that in Dacca, at least, the army's claim to have won control was accurate. And after prolonged fighting, the same may now be true of Chittagong, the province's main port. How much resistance there still is elsewhere is unclear. The army owed its apparent success to the suddenness with which it struck arresting a number of the Awami League leaders as well as shooting up parts of Dacca—and unpreparedness of the Awami League Organisation.

But though he may have pacified the main cities, shattered the Awami leadership and cowed many Bengalis into submissiveness, President Yahya's problems are only just beginning. He will find it difficult to police the countryside; much of East Pakistan split by innumerable waterways, is the sort of terrain regular soldiers hate but guerrillas love.

Like neighbouring West Bengal, East Pakistan has its share of Pro-Peking peasant revolutionaries preaching violence. So long as Sheikh Mujib promised the fruits of autonomy through negotiation they remained weak and eclipsed by Sheikh Mujib's rising star. But that the army has moved in so bloodily their argument that the violence can only be met with violence may seem unanswerable. Presumably their numbers will rise. And so will the level of the Ganges and Brahmaputra which, by the time the monsoon comes in May

or June, will make most of East Pakistan impassable for any troops but the men with an automatic and a sack of rice. No doubt the guerrillas will be pretty unco-ordinated, because the army seems to have rounded up a good many of their potential leaders ; but even a disorganised resistance may be widespread enough to tie down a lot of the 70,000 troops in the eastern region. And President Yahya has a major logistic problem in getting supplies and reinforcement all the way from West Pakistan.

There are other problems for President Yahya besides the threat of guerrilla action. He will have to get the life of the province, which has been running at a trickle for the past month moving again, and this with a population embittered by the re-imposition of the West Pakistani military rule. The bitterness will have been compounded by the Army's apparent disregard for civilians. Some Bengalis willing to serve the Martial Law regime will, of course, be found ; a lot of others are just not going to co-operate. President Yahya may well have to import Punjabis to run the civil service, and use the army to run essential services. Nor has he any guarantee that West Pakistan will keep quiet. It probably will. But the minority provinces of Baluchistan and North-West Frontier have already shown sympathy for Sheikh Mujib's ideas about provincial autonomy. Martial Law will presumably continue to apply in West Pakistan and even Mr. Bhutto may be weary of a situation which prevents him from taking power in any shape.

In the same speech in which be branded Sheikh Mujib a traitor, President Yahya reiterated that his main aim remained the same i.e. the transfer of power to the people's elected representatives "as soon as the situation permits". But when will it permit. And who will be regarded as an acceptable elected representatives of East Pakistan ? If Sheikh Mujib is ruled out the President will either have to hope that a quisling will emerge to negotiate with him, or call new elections. Unless these elections are rigged it is hard to see any one now winning the East Pakistani vote except of a ticket not of autonomy, but of independence. It does see that unless President Yahya drops his present definition of the 'unity and integrity of Pakistan" he will never shed the office he so fervently disclaims.

The optimistic hope is that tight martial law will cool the situation down to a point where some sort of negotiations on provincial autonomy could start again. This hope depends on whether you believe that President Yahya was negotiating at Dacca in good faith or just buying time for military preparations. There is evidence that he was doing both. But if the President did not think the talks would solve anything, it is difficult not to agree with him. For the talks were only about the conditions of Sheikh Mujib's attendance at the National Assembly ; they did not tackle real question of the Sheikh Mujib's six-point plan for East Pakistan. And those six points would inevitably have divided President Yahya and Sheikh Mujib sooner or later. Control of foreign trade would have let East Pakistan to trade with India, which would have given it one main attribute of independent foreign policy. There is no halfway house in the kind of autonomy Sheikh Mujib was demanding. So, however, much one may dislike what President Yahya has done, it is difficult not to agree with him the negotiations over Sheikh Mujib's demands could only result in all or nothing. President Yahya has decided on nothing.

The fact that Bengali resistance seems to have been easily crushed by the army makes it unlikely that anyone abroad is going to offer recognition to Bangla Desh. But guerrilla activity may get outside help, notably from India. On Wednesday the Indian Parliament unanimously passed a resolution, moved by Mrs. Gandhi, condemning the use of force in East Pakistan. There is pressure on Mrs. Gandhi to go further than this, West Bengalis have already offered arms and shelter to East Pakistani 'freedom fighters". But Mrs. Gandhi is alive to the dangers of overt, official support, she has warned Indians that "one wrong step or one wrong word may have an effect entirely different to what we all intend". She should be cautious in her acts as her words. The Pakistani army would crack down the Bengalis all the harder if Indian involvement were suspected.

No doubt Mrs. Gandhi also fears the long-term effects of guerrilla co-operation between East and West Bengal. If Maoist propaganda came to replace Hindu-Muslim mistrust, it could lay the foundations of a united Bengal, independent of India, too. But Mrs. Gandhi will find it hard to seal off India's 900 mile border with East Pakistan ; and unofficial Indian

support would create the classic RECIPE for guerrilla success with East Pakistani guerrillas striking out of a safe Indian hinterland.

Not surprisingly, there has not been a word from Peking about the crisis. The Chinese must be having difficult times in making their minds up. On the one hand they have helped to equip the army and have supported it over Kashmir, a policy which has won them warm praise from West Pakistanis, and Mr. Bhutto in particular. The Chinese have close links with West Pakistan all weather road through the Himalayas has just been opened and they also have strategic interest in maintaining them, most favourable status in this area, where four nations meet. On the other hand, the Bengali revolt may develop into just the sort of "Liberation War" that Peking usually feels tempted to support. Of course, Maoists are going to play a large part in any guerrilla campaign in East Pakistan. But Chinese support for the Bengalis would mean support for a movement which wants closer relations with India and would jeopardise China's special relationship with West Pakistan.

This is the time Peking had been confronted with such a startle choice between national and ideological interests. The Chinese would probably like to duck the whole dilemma by ignoring it; that will be difficult if a call for help come from the Bengalis. But at the moment outside help will only keep a bloody civil war dragging on. Foreign sympathisers with East Pakistan's plight would be better advised to use such influence as they have in urging President Yahya to offer a resumption of the dialogue with Bengal before he finds himself fighting an insoluble guerrilla war.

U.S. Govt. Top Secret Report.

CONFLICT IN EAST PAKISTAN: BACKGROUND AND PROSPECTS.

Editor's Note : This report was prepared by Mr. Arthur K. Blood, Consul-General, American Consulate, Dacca with the help of three eminent scholars of Harvard University, U.S.A. They are Mr. Edward A. Mason, Mr. Robert Dorfman and Mr. Stephen A. Marglin. After having compiled the report, Mr. Blood sent it to the U.S. Senate for their necessary guidance.

Later on, it was learnt that Mr. Arthur K. Blood was called back to Washington as a result of his not seeing the fact eye to eye with the U.S. Govt. When we heard of this incident, we were mad to have possession of such secret report. A Bengali employee of the U.S. mission got this report smuggled out of mission which we now place before our readers.

The independence of East Pakistan is inevitable. What started as a movement for economic autonomy within the framework of a united Pakistan has been irrevocably transferred by the wholesale slaughter of East Pakistani civilians into a movement that sooner or later will produce an independent East Pakistan—"Bangla Desh" is a matter of time. A complete discussion of the Pakistan question would include an analysis of cultural, linguistic and social issues, which, along with economic and politics, are at the heart of the present conflict. This paper has a more limited goal : to assess the economic and political bases of disaffection in East Pakistan and to suggest the likely implications for international relations of the break up of Pakistan.

In brief, the fact of a large and widening gap in the average standard of living between the two regions of the country is incontestable. Even the West Pakistan dominated Government admits that the average East Pakistan must not do with barely two-thirds average income in the West, and he faces higher prices too. The East Pakistanis argue that income

disparity is largely the result of a systematic subordination of the interests of the Eastern region to those of the West; specially, the East Pakistanis charge that allocation of foreign exchange—both that earned by the export of East Pakistani jute and that provided by foreign aid—disproportionately favours West Pakistan; that allocation of domestic investment reinforces the income disparity; and that high tariffs and import quota prices to East Pakistanis in order to provide profits and jobs in West Pakistan.

We believe that in the main the facts support these charges. Pakistan Government policies have, at the very least, excerpted the inequalities that arise from an uneven distribution of natural resources between the two regions, and a disproportionate shares of the benefits of economic development have accrued to West Pakistan.

The political programme of Sheikh Mujib's Awami League, overwhelmingly endorsed by the people of East Pakistan in the recent elections, sought to correct these disparities by transferring control over economic policy from the Central Government to the provinces. The response of the Yahya Khan's Government has been to unleash a reign of terror whose full dimensions are only gradually becoming known.

The West Pakistani Army can delay independence, but terrain and logistics coupled with the implacable hostility of the East Pakistanis to what has become foreign domination, are on the side of "Bangla Desh". Apart from the elementary and overwhelmingly humanitarian interest in an end to further bloodshed, American interest lies with a quick rather than a slow realisation of independence. Most important, tension in South Asia will be reduced. Bangla Desh and India will develop mutually advantageous economic and cultural relations, a move long desired by both sides but frustrated by West Pakistanis who have refused to countenance any normalisation of relations in the East as long as the Kashmir issue remains outstanding. The Kashmir issue, too, is likely to subside in importance, not because of any reduction in tension in the West—the Kashmir issue has never aroused much interest in the East but because West Pakistan, without the economic support of the East, will be unable to sustain the level of pressure it has been able to mount until now. In short, Bangla Desh will be a truly independent state, ready and able to

maintain normal relations with its neighbours and the powerful nations of both block, but a satellite or pawn of no one.

The independence of Bangla Desh will be inimical to American interests only in so far as American aid is used to delay the inevitable. Economic aid to the Pakistan Government should be immediately suspended. The "one-time" exception made last year to the embargo of arms sales and military aid (imposed after the Indo-Pakistani war of 1965) should be rescinded. American arms must not be supplied to a Government that makes war on helpless civilians.

U.S. ECONOMIC AND MILITARY AID TO PAKISTAN

Since 1951 Pakistan has been a major recipient of U.S. economic aid amounting to approximately 3 billion by 1969. Except for food aid donated under Public Law 480, the bulk of this assistance has been used to support industrialisation in West Pakistan, with only a handful of projects undertaken in East Pakistan.

The quantum of U.S. military aid to Pakistan is a classified figure but two estimates put it between $ 1.5 to $ 2 billion for the period between 1954 and 1965. The assistance has included F-104 Starfighters, Patton tanks, armoured personnel carriers, automatic and recoilless infantry weapons. This impressive array of modern weaponry was given expressly for defensive purposes. With Pakistan an early member of SEATO and CENTO this military aid was intended to bolster the armed containment of the Communist Block in the Dulles era of U.S. Foreign policy but apart from the brief border war with India of 1965 the only active use of these sophisticated weapons has occurred against the unarmed and defenseless civilians of East Pakistan.

The growth and maintenance of the superstructure of the armed forces which was built up with massive U.S. military aid continued even after 1965 when the United States decided to put an embargo on the delivery of arms to both Pakistan and India. This was made possible by diverting resources from the much-needed development projects. East Pakistan,

poorer and less powerful politically than the West, suffered more by this irrational policy.

Suprisingly, the United States has just recently (October 1970) made an exception to its embargo on military sales to Pakistan. According to the information available, the United States has offered to supply Pakistan the following items:

(a) Armoured personnel carriers (approx. 300)

(b) Maritime reconnaissance Aircraft (4)

(c) F-104 Jet fighters (6)

(d) B-57 bombers (7).

Fortunately, no sales or deliveries have yet been made. It is not too late to rescind the offer, a move that would be of practical as well as symbolic value.

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DOMINATION OF EAST AND WEST.

The basic facts seem to support the East Pakistan charge of economic domination by the West. The economic disparities between East and West Pakistan have been so serious for so long that the Pakistan Government's highest planning authority has been forced to take official note of them.

A recent report by a panel of experts to the Planning Commission of the Government of Pakistan provides authoritative documentation of the widening of economic disparities in the two regions. The most striking fact in this report is the widening gap between the income of the average West Pakistani and his Eastern counterpart. In 1959-60, the per capita income in West Pakistan was 32% higher than in the East. Over the next ten years annual rate of growth of income of West Pakistan was 6.2% while it was on 4.2% in East Pakistan. As a result, by 1969-70 the per capita income of the West was 61% higher than in the East. Thus in ten years the income gap doubled in percentage terms, it increased even more in absolute terms.

East Pakistanis blame three instruments of central government policy for their plight:

1. Pakistan's scant investible resources, plus foreign aid, are directed unduly to the development of West Pakistan to the comparative neglect of East Pakistan.
2. In particular, East Pakistan's foreign trade earnings are diverted to finance imports for West Pakistan.
3. Economic policy favours West Pakistan at the expense of the East. Specially, tariffs, import controls, and industrial licensing compel East Pakistan to purchase commodities from West Pakistan which, but for the controls, they could obtain more cheaply in world markets.

We believe the East Pakistani claims to be largely justified. First, it is indisputable that the bulk of public investment has been in West Pakistan though the majority of the population lies in the East. With 60% of the population, East Pakistan's share of central government development expenditure has been as low as 20% during 1950/51—1954/55 attaining a peak of 36% during the Third Five Year Plan period 1965/66—1969/70. East Pakistan has received an even smaller share of private investment, less than 25%.

It may be true, as defenders of Pakistan government policy claim, that the great bulk of worthwhile investment opportunities have been in the West, though the relative attractiveness of the West may be more the effect of overall government policy than a cause. In any event the fact remains that investments in the West have done little or nothing for the people in the East.

As for the second point, it is clear that foreign exchange has been allocated to the detriment of East Pakistan. Over the last two decades East Pakistan's share of total Pakistan export earnings has varied between 50% and 70% while its share of imports has been in the range of 25% to 30%. Until 1962—63 East Pakistan has shown significant surpluses on foreign account, which has changed in recent years to small deficits. By contrast the West's foreign trade has shown a substantial and chronic deficit that has absorbed virtually all foreign exchange made available through foreign aid.

With respect to the third point, general economic policy has clearly favoured West Pakistan. The West's preponderant share of imports and investments might have provided inexpensive necessities for all of Pakistan's people. In fact, it has allowed the development of inefficient industries, which, ironically, have prospered largely because of tariffs and quotas that have made East Pakistan a captive market. 40% of all exports of West Pakistan are sold to East Pakistan; in 1968-69 the West sold 50% more to the East than it bought from the East.

An analysis of foreign trade data reveals that a net transfer of resources has taken place from East to West Pakistan. According to the official report referred to above, East Pakistan has transferred approximately $2.6 billion to West Pakistan over the period 1948-49 to 1968-69.

In short, Pakistan's economic policies are harmful to East Pakistan. "Exploitation" may be a strong word, but it seems clear, all in all, that East Pakistan's economic interest have been subordinated to those of the West, and that the East Pakistanis have had good cause to resent that fact.

The economic domination of East Pakistan has been facilitated by West Pakistani dominance of the Central Government. The military regime of Pakistan has existed, with modifications, since 1958, and decision-making authority rests with a well-entrenched civil service and their military bosses. All senior military members of the administration have been West Pakistani in 1960, and the proportion has not changed much since. The Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission and the Central Finance Minister, key individuals in resource allocation, have always been West Pakistanis.

The location of the Central government in West Pakistan has encouraged the concentration of industry and the entrepreneurial class in West Pakistan. Such a concentration is to be expected in an economic system where direct allocational control of resources by the government makes direct access to government authorities a prime business asset.

BACKGROUND TO THE BREAKUP OF PAKISTAN

The history of economic and political domination of East Pakistan by the West led naturally to increasing demands for provincial autonomy spearheaded by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League. Its 6-point platform for autonomy sought to transfer control over foreign trade, foreign aid allocation and taxation, powers to the provinces so that no province could be dominated through disproportionate control of central government's powers over resource allocation.

At the polls last December this Awami League platform swept 167 of the 169 seats in the National Constituent Assembly that were allotted to East Pakistan. The Awami League's 167 seats constituted an absolute majority in a chamber of 313. The political and military powers of West Pakistan tried to pressure Sheikh Mujib into compromising on his 6-point autonomy mandate. In particular Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, leader of the West Pakistani People's Party which had won 80 odd seats in the elections, demanded that control of trade and aid should remain with the Central Government. When Sheikh Mujib refused to compromise on these instruments of past economic domination, Bhutto announced a boycott of the Constituent Assembly scheduled to meet on March 3. General Yahya Khan used this pretext to postpone the Assembly indefinitely. This arbitrary postponement provoked demonstrations in Dacca and other cities on March 3, which the military decided to control by force. The military authorities conceded 172 deaths in the disturbances (the Dacca correspondent of the London Observer put the figure nearer 2000). Despite this bloody provocation the Awami League refrained from declaring independence. Instead they launched a campaign of civil disobedience to demand a return of troops to barracks and an enquiry into the firings. The campaign of non-cooperation effectively transferred civilian authority to Sheikh Mujib, but even in the massive rally of March 7 Sheikh Mujib still spoke of a united Pakistan with autonomy for each province. His preparedness for negotiation and commitment to the unity of Pakistan was demonstrated by his continuation of talks for the next two weeks despite the well advertised influx of West Pakistani troops. Indeed, in retrospect it would appear that the West Pakistani officials were never negotiating in good faith; negotiations were a way to forestall an open

break until sufficient numbers of West Pakistani troops could be brought on the scene to unleash a terror whose full dimensions are only now becoming known. The Awami League's commitment to a peaceful political settlement was convincingly demonstrated by the complete lack of preparation of the civilian population to the onslaught of military arms which was unleashed on them on the night of Thursday March 25.

INTERNATIONAL IMPLICATION OF AN INDEPENDENT "BANGLA DESH"

From news reports now available it would appear that the use of massive military fire-power has broken the Awami League and its supporters in most urban centres. But control of urban centres at gunpoint in a country where 90% of the population lives in rural areas hardly constitutes a framework for any effective government, let alone a popular one. The immediate prospect is for ruthless military rule in urban centres, with tenuous control over a country-side which is likely to become increasingly the base for armed guerrilla resistance.

The place for such a movement clearly exists. The overwhelming support for the Awami League's demand for autonomy was clearly shown in the election results of December when 167 out of 169 seats allotted to East Pakistan were won by the League. As reports of military massacres are carried by urban refugees to the rural areas, the democratically expressed sentiment for autonomy is likely to be converted to a militant desire for independence. It is possible that a West Pakistani army of occupation can suppress the Bengali nation for two months, six months or a year, but the American experience in Vietnam illustrates only too painfully the impossibility of holding an entire population captive by force of alien arms alone.

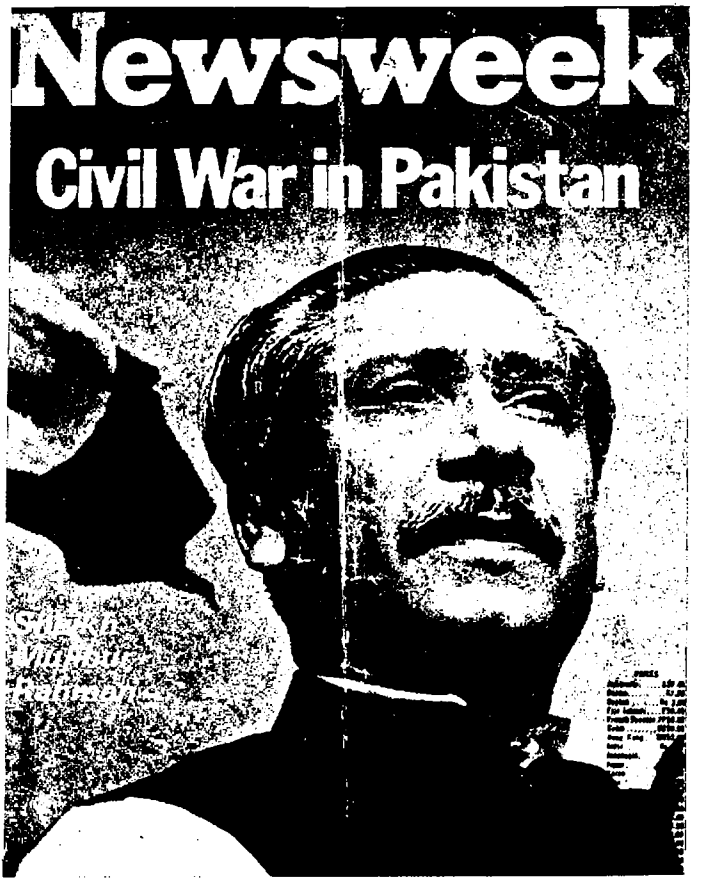
The emergence of an independent Bangla Desh appears to be inevitable in the long run. What remains in question is how much blood will flow before it occurs. Politically it

is clear that the longer it takes to achieve independence, the more likely it is that control of the independence movement will slip away from the moderate leadership of the Awami League to the more leftist National Awami Party (which did not contest the December elections).

Assuming that the independence movement succeeds while Awami League control, certain predictions may be made about its relations with neighbours and super-powers. As expressed in public statements of Sheikh Mujib, an independent Bangla Desh will establish friendly relations with India and set up economic trade to their mutual advantage. Upto now such trade and all cultural ties have been frustrated by the West Pakistanis who dominate the Central Government. They believe that short of war, their only lever to force a settlement of their Kashmir claim is the economic interest of India in trade with East Pakistan. By contrast, East Pakistan has never been aroused by Kashmir and in the 1965 war no military activity took place within its borders. Strong linguistic and cultural ties with the state of West Bengal in India are likely to help cement durable good relations between the two countries and reduce tension in the area. Unable to share the burden of military expenditures with the East, West Pakistan is bound to tone down its policy of confrontation with India, a confrontation which, for the past 24 years, has diverted scarce resources of both these poor populous countries from much needed economic development to defence.

As an independent nation Bangla Desh might conceivably establish marginal economic contracts with Communist China. But these are unlikely to be any greater than the current scale of trade and aid between China and Pakistan, and will certainly be less than the likely range and depth of East Bengal's economic ties to neighbouring India. As long as India is the main trading partner (and both pronouncements of Awami League leaders and the economic geography of the region support this possibility), it is unlikely the Bangla Desh will become a satellite of Communist China.

The USSR has, in the past three years, become an active patron of the military clique that controls Pakistan. Soviet aid has included considerable economic aid (including agreements for a steel mill in West Pakistan) and some military aid. The Soviet initiative has been largely a response to



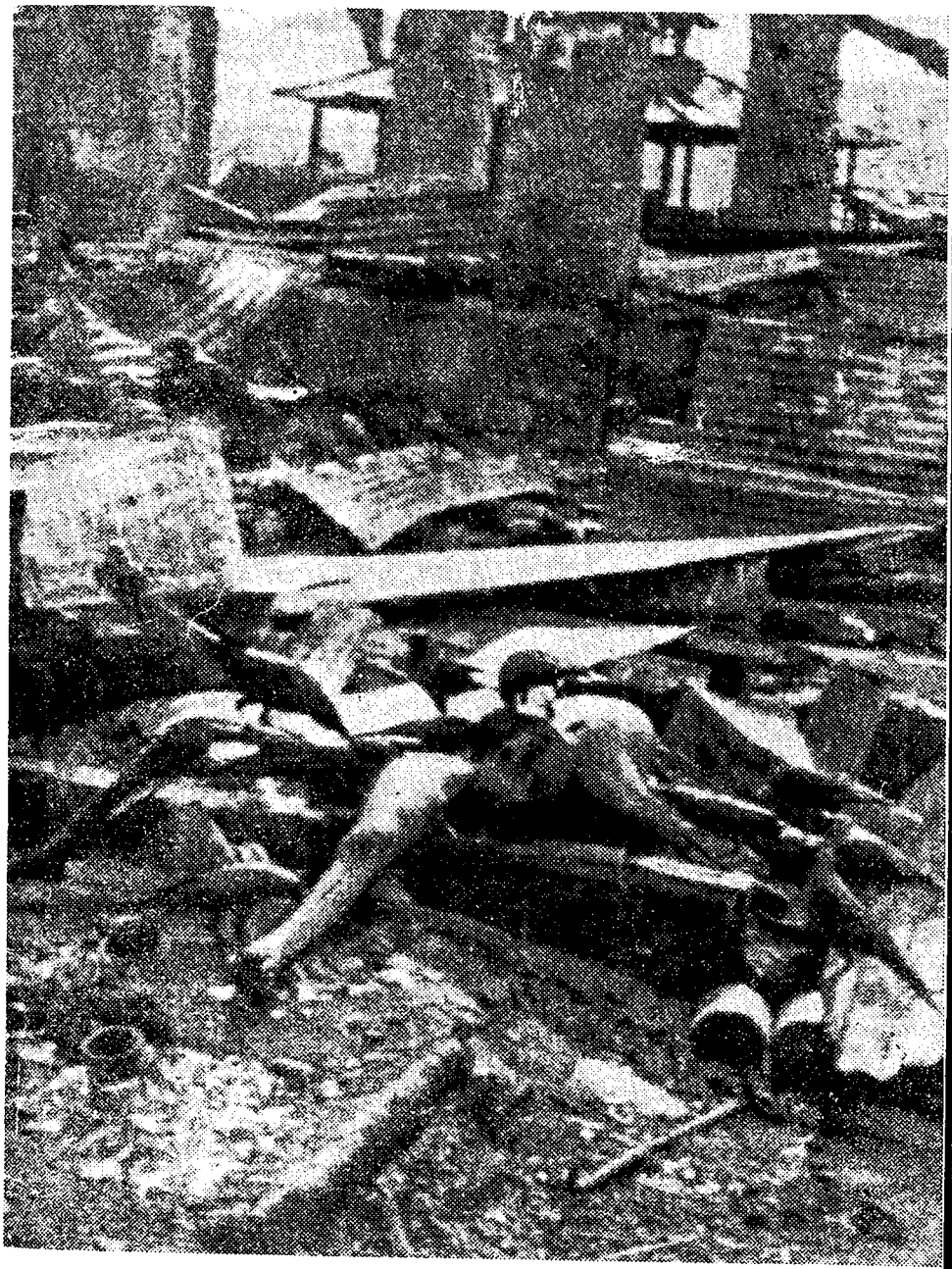
Cover story : 5-4-71.



"Killing is bloody fun"—From a Booklet published by Calcutta University.



Bengalis amidst their ruins.
Time : 12--71



"If blood is the price of people's right to independence, then Bangladesh has over-paid".
—New Statesman.



Sheikh Mujib under custody at Karachi Airport.
Newsweek : 26-4-71.

growing Communist Chinese ties with Pakistan. This competition between rival giants has rebounded to the benefit of West Pakistan where the central government and military establishment are based. The USSR has not been sensitive to the aspirations of East Pakistanis in the past, and is unlikely to make a new Bangla Desh an arena for superpower competition for influence.

A major goal of U.S. foreign policy in this area has been the reduction of the debilitating confrontation between India and Pakistan. This goal will surely be advanced by the existence of an independent Bangla Desh friendly to India. Most observers believe that the Awami League leadership will follow neutral foreign policy, particulary where the U.S. and multilateral aid agencies like the World Bank are the major aid donors.

Bengali independence will be inimical to American interests only if by following short-sighted policies we drive East Pakistan into the arms of another power—the USSR or China. To the extent that Bengali independence is delayed by means of American arms, the image of the United States will suffer, and rightly so. The offer of arms to Pakistan by the United States Government in October 1970, whatever its ostensible purpose, will do more harm than good when a Pakistani military machine is making war on its own citizens. The United States Government must rescind this offer forthwith. No further military aid, or economic aid, which directly or indirectly provides foreign exchange that makes it possible to buy weapons abroad, should be given to West Pakistan until it withdraws its occupation force from East Bengal and recognises the independence of the Bengali nation.

NEWSWEEK, April 5, 1971.

PAKISTAN PLUNGES INTO CIVIL WAR

The man and his party are enemies of Pakistan. This crime will not go unpunished. We will not allow some power-hungry and unpatriotic people to destroy this country and play with the destiny of 120 million people.

—President Mohammed Yahya Khan.

Come out of your houses with whatever weapons you have. Resist the enemy forces at any cost....until the last enemy soldier is vanquished, and save the country from the ruthless dictatorship of West Pakistanis.

—Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Until the very last moment, it looked as if the two proud men entrusted with Pakistan's destiny might still be able to avert a head-on clash. From the East Pakistani capital of Dacca came optimistic reports that President Mohammed Yahya Khan and Mujib as the leader of secessionist-minded East Pakistan is known—were about to reach a compromise. But then, with stunning suddenness, the pieces of Pakistan's complicated political puzzle flew apart. In the East Pakistan cities of Rangpur and Chittagong, federal troops poured machine-gun fire into mobs of demonstrating Bengali nationalists. Swiftly, Yahya issued orders to his army to "crush the movement and restore the full authority of the government". In his turn, Mujib proclaimed East Pakistan the "sovereign, independent People's Republic of Bangla Desh (Bengali Nation)." And with that, Pakistan was plunged into civil war.

Thus, in the 24th year of Pakistan's existence the bond that had held the eastern and western sectors of the country in tenuous union snapped. Because Pakistan's central government immediately imposed strict censorship on communications in and out of East Pakistan, early reports were sketchy. Still, even the fragmentary dispatches from neighbouring India provided a dismal picture of bloody fighting that pitted

a modern, professional army against rebels who were often armed with little more than passion and pitchforks. Hopelessly outgunned, the East Pakistani guerrillas reportedly suffered thousands of casualties. But although by the end of the week it appeared that the federal army—largely composed of fierce Punjabis—had dealt its Bengali adversary a devastating blow, few people thought that the widely separated wings of Pakistan could ever be effectively reunited again.

What made the Pakistani upheaval so unexpected was that it occurred even as Yahya and Mujib were in the midst of private negotiations. On hearing the reports of "massacres" in Rangpur and Chittagong, an enraged Mujib accused the army of unleashing a reign of terror. Yahya's response was to quiet the talks in a huff and leave Dacca unannounced to return to West Pakistan. Back in his home region, the President took to national radio to ban Mujib's Awami League, East Pakistan's dominant political organisation. Sheikh Mujib's action of starting his non-cooperation movement is "an act of treason" the President declared.

Shortly after Yahya left Dacca, the army's tough martial law administrator Lt.-Gen. Tikka Khan slapped tight censorship over East Pakistan. All foreign correspondents were restricted to their hotels and then, after federal troops seized their notes and films, the reporters were expelled from the country. Among the correspondents forced to leave was NEWSWEEK'S Loren Jenkins, who filed this report:

From our windows in Dacca's modern Intercontinental Hotel, we watched a jeepful of soldiers roll up to a shopping centre and taking aim with a heavy machine-gun open fire on a crowd. While the firing was still going on some fifteen young Bengalis appeared in the street about 200 yards away and shouted defiantly at the soldiers. The youths seemed to be empty-handed, but the soldiers turned the machine-gun on them anyway. Then, the federal soldiers moved down an adjacent alley leading to the office of a pro-Mujib daily newspaper that had strongly denounced the army The troops shouted in Urdu, a language which few Bengalis understand—warning anyone inside to surrender or be shot. No one emerged. So they blasted the building and set it afire. And when they emerged, they waved their hands in triumph and shouted "Pakistan Zindabad" (Long Live Pakistan").

By late in the week, firing throughout the city was heavy and flashes of 105-mm. howitzers in the night preceded the heavy crump of incoming shells which seemed to be landing on the new campus of Dacca University. I woke up one morning to the sound of six Chinese-made T-54 light tanks clanging down Airport Road. A grey pall of smoke hung low over the muggy sky. Soon new artillery blasts were heard and new fires were seen in the region of old Dacca, a warren of narrow, open-sewered streets where most of the capital's population lives in cramped one-room homes.

The West Pakistani troops in Dacca showed all the signs of having the jitters. Many shot off random bursts of automatic weapons fire at the slightest noise. And when some of the reporters in the Intercontinental Hotel ventured outside and asked to tour the city, an army captain stationed in front of the hotel threatened to shoot us. Ordering us back inside, he shouted angrily : "If I can kill my own people, I can kill you".

At the outset of the crackdown, the army ordered striking government workers either to return to work or face military trial, and imposed a 24-hour curfew. Meanwhile, a truckload of soldiers moved through the city, stopping in front of any house flying the new green, red and yellow banner of Bangla Desh. At every such building, the troops ordered to pull down the flags. In the area around the hotel, their first stop was a three-storey brick house—where a woman in a sari slowly mounted to the roof and, under the menacing gaze of the soldiers, reluctantly lowered her flag.

With Jenkins and other foreign reporters expelled from East Pakistan, the world was left to the mercy of conflicting radio reports for its information. The official government radio in Karachi announced that the army had arrested Mujib. But a clandestine radio in Dacca, identifying itself as the Voice of Independent Bangla Desh, proclaimed that Mujib was still safe in his underground headquarters. Under his leadership, said a rebel radio announcer : "The people of Bangla Desh will shed more blood...."

If Pakistan was disintegrating in division and violence, it had, in a sense, only moved full circle in its quarter-century history. For Pakistan emerged as a nation in 1947 out of

divisions and strife. Propelled by Mohammad Ali Jinnah's driving vision of a Moslem homeland in South Asia, Pakistan was assembled from the predominantly Moslem areas of British India. But the partitioning of India touched off a six-month blood-bath between Hindus and Moslems in which an estimated half million people perished. And it created a Pakistan with two distant wings separated by 1,100 miles of Indian territory.

This geographical handicap was serious enough. But to further complicate matters, their shared devotion to Islam is virtually all that the two sectors of Pakistan have in common. West Pakistan is a land of desert and mountains and a generally arid climate: the far more densely populated eastern wing is a humid land of jungles and alluvial plains. And the differences in racial personality between the Punjabis of West Pakistan and the Bengalis of the East are extreme. A proud, martial people, the Punjabis look down upon the Bengalis and over the years have consistently exploited their countrymen in the east.

Clean Sweep

Ironically, President Yahya was the first West Pakistani leader to openly admit that East Pakistan had never received its fair share of political power and economic resources in the Pakistani union. To rectify matters, Yahya provided Pakistan with its first national elections conducted strictly on a one-man, one-vote basis. But the results of last December's voting turned out to be something of a shocker. In the east, Mujib's Awami League all but swept the boards clean. And because the more populous east had a larger allotment of seats in the National Assembly, Mujib's forces came up with a clear parliamentary majority as well.

During the campaign, Mujib proclaimed a six-point programme aimed at diminishing the powers of Pakistan's central government while granting virtual autonomy to each province. Not surprisingly, it was a plan that the top vote-getting politician in West Pakistan, the mercurial, left-leaning ex-Foreign Minister, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, found totally unacceptable. When Bhutto's supporters refused to take part in the new National Assembly, Yahya was forced to postpone its opening. This, in turn, prompted Mujib to launch a civil-disobedience campaign which virtually destroyed federal authority in East Pakistan and made him the region's effective

ruler. And in the end that left Yahya no choice but to grant the Bengali demands or to resort to force.

In branding Mujib an outlaw, Yahya slammed shut the door to further negotiations and opted instead for a military solution to his dilemma. But although the federal force in East Pakistan (whose size is variously estimated at anywhere from 20,000 to 70,000 men) was far superior in training and equipment to its enemy, it faced some severe problems. Lacking direct land links between West and East Pakistan, and banned from flying over India, federal army commanders had to move their men the long way around the southern tip of India by way of Ceylon. "For the short term," said a U.S. Analyst, "Pakistan's army should be able to tear hell out of the Bengali landscape. But for the long term, they have a terrible logistic problems."

Guerrilla Haven

Against the federal forces, the Bengalis could muster barely 15,000 troops, most of them militiamen armed with obsolete World War II weapons. But while the Bengalis were no match for the federal army in the cities, military observers noted that the surrounding countryside, where 90 per cent of East Pakistan's population lives, is a virtual haven for guerrilla warfare. A maze of sunken rice fields, tea plantations, jute fields and banana groves, it is an ideal ambush country reminiscent of South Vietnam's Mekong Delta. As a result, most foreign military analysts believe that prolonged military occupation of the east would put an intolerable strain on the Pakistani Army.

Nonetheless, if Yahya chose to indulge in wholesale slaughter, it was probable that he could stamp out the rebellion in East Pakistan, at least for the time being. And if the reports of Mujib's capture proved true, that would surely be a severe blow to the cause of Bangla Desh. But no matter how harsh the federal crackdown, Bengali resistance whether in the form of civil disobedince or a Viet Cong-style guerrilla struggle appeared likely to continue. Yahya, in fact, was seemingly faced with the ugly prospect of being a colonial ruler in his own country. For when the federal army opened up with tanks and automatic weapons in Dacca last week, it mortally wounded any remaining chance that the two disparate wings of Pakistan could ever live in harmony again.

A People Apart: The Complex Bengalis

To anyone acquainted with the character of the Bengalis, it seemed almost inevitable that some day they would try to form their own independent nation. Despite their incorporation into India and Pakistan when the British Raj left the subcontinent in 1947, some 120 million Bengalis (70 millions of whom live in East Pakistan and most of the rest in India's West Bengal) still consider themselves a race apart from and above their neighbours. Emotional and talkative, the dark-skinned Bengalis have more in common with each other than with their co-religionists, Hindu or Moslem, or with their compatriots, Indian or Pakistani. Says one Western expert: "They consider themselves to be Bengalis first, Moslems or Hindus second, and Pakistanis or Indians a poor third."

Culturally, ethnically, linguistically and spiritually, the Bengalis are different from their countrymen in Pakistan and India. For one thing, as Bengali scholars will inform all who pause to listen, the name Bengal is derived from the ancient kingdom of Bangla, which goes back at least to the third century B.C. One of the oldest literary streams in Asia also flows in Bengal, whose Indo-Aryan language and recorded history date back at least a thousand years. Boastful of this long literary heritage, intellectual Bengalis were most eloquent on the subject of Rabindranath Tagore, their greatest modern literary figure. In his combination of mysticism and lyricism, Tagore may have been the quintessential Bengali poet, novelist and dramatist, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913.

Talk

If the written language is one of the Bengali's glories, the spoken one is one of its burdens. In the cafes of Calcutta and Dacca, Bengalis palaver endlessly, spinning out airy intellectual concepts and political schemes. An Indian joke goes like this: "Every committee must have four members: a Mukherjee, a Bannerjee, a Chatterjee (all Bengali names) and a Singh." Singh is a Sikh name. The Sikhs, unlike the Bengalis, are noted for their action, and the implication is that the lone Sikh is the fellow who will execute the programme.

A people who have suffered hundreds of invasions and conquests, including that of the British in the eighteenth century, the Bengalis long ago learnt to cultivate the arts of accommodation. Unlike the proud Punjabis his opponent in the current strife, the Bengali knew how to bow and scrape. Dressed in his dhoti, spouting flowery language, armed only with an umbrella, the Bengali was regarded by all as a reliable, efficient clerk. Fighting was best left to more martial people.

The other main cliche about the Bengalis portrays them as crafty fellows ready to outsmart you if given half a chance. "Watch it", a merchant might say. "He's a Bengali." The message is that the person in question is not only clever but possibly also capable of a little sharp practice.

And yet, despite their reputation as a guileful, docile people, the Bengalis have more than once demonstrated a dark, explosive side. The most ruthless, dedicated terrorists during the fighting against the British came from Bengal. And since partition the Bengali regions of both India and Pakistan have been the scene of constant political turmoil and near revolution. "They may seem docile." says one American scholar". But they are capable of violence when sparked the wrong way." And then, in words that may prove to be all too perceptive, he adds : "There is a side to the Bengali mentality that thrives on chaos."

POET OF POLITICS

When Sheikh Mujibur Rahman proclaimed the independence of Bangla Desh last week some of his critics declared that he was merely yielding to the pressure of his extremist supporters, seeking to ride the crest of a wave in order to avoid being engulfed by it. But it a sense Mujib's emergence as the embattled leader of a new Bengali "nation" is the logical outcome of a lifetime spent fighting for Bengali nationalism. Although Mujib may be riding the crest of a wave, his presence there is no accident. Born just 51 years ago to well-to-do landowner in a village near Dacca, Mujib went through his early schooling without distinguishing himself by intellectual accomplishment. He was outgoing and popular as a boy, fond of talk and people and sports—and by the time he went to Calcutta's Islamia College for a liberal Arts degree

he had come to the attention of his elders as a Muslim League activist. His mentor then was H.S. Suhrawardy, Prime Minister of Bengal under British Raj, who, later, served one year as Prime Minister of Pakistan. Mujib studied law, but unlike Suhrawardy, a moderate, he soon developed a penchant for direct action. In the late '40s both men realised that their native state of Bengal was getting less than its due in the new nation of Pakistan. Suhrawardy, in 1949, founded a new party, the Awami League, dedicated to a united "Bengal for the Bengalis." Mujib took to the streets and was twice arrested and jailed for leading illegal strikes and demonstrations..

Out of prison, Mujib became Suhrawardy's right-hand man within the Awami League, but then destroyed his leader's efforts to compromise and form a coalition with other parties. Mujib's success enabled the Awami League to form a new East Pakistan Provincial Government in 1956, and he served in it for seven months as a Minister of Commerce and Industry. After Suhrawardy died in 1963, Mujib apparently felt less hampered by the older man's principles of moderation. He revived the Awami League, pursued his "instinctive" style of politics, and demanded internal self-rule. When Mohammad Ayub Khan had him arrested again in 1966, on charges of plotting to make East Pakistan independent, East Pakistan came close to open rebellion, and the turmoil forced Ayub to release Mujib and resign. Mujib emerged as a hero to his people.

Tall for a Bengali (he stands 5 feet 11 inches), with a shock of greying hair, a bushy mustache and alert black eyes, Mujib can attract a crowd of a million people to his rallies and hold them spell-bound with great rolling waves of emotional rhetoric. "Even when you are talking alone with him," says a diplomat, "he talks like he's addressing 60,000 people." Eloquent in Urdu, Bengali and English, three languages of Pakistan, Mujib does not pretend to be an original thinker. He is a poet of politics, not an engineer, but the Bengalis tend to be more artistic than technical, anyhow, and so his style may be just what was needed to unite all the classes and ideologies of the region.

A month ago, at a time when he was still publicly refraining from proclaiming independence Mujib privately told NEWSWEEK'S Loren Jenkins that "there is no hope of salvaging the situation. The country, as we know it, is

finished." But he waited for President Mohammad Yahya Khan to make the break. "We are the majority, so we cannot secede. They, the Westerners, are the minority, and it is up to them to secede."

Two weeks later as the crisis deepened, hundreds of Bengalis crowded the yard and hallways of Mujib's home in suburban Dacca, and puffing on a pipe ("the only foreign thing I use"), he cheerfully spoke to them all. After addressing one enthusiastic gathering Sheikh Mujibur Rahman turned to Western newsmen and said: "I have this sort of thing from 5 a.m. on. Do you think any one can suppress this spirit with machine guns?" A few days later someone was trying.

TIME Magazine April 5, 1971.
THE WORLD
PAKISTAN: TOPPLING OVER THE BRINK

With the awesome fury of a cyclone off the Bay of Bengal, civil war swept across East Pakistan last week. In city after crowded dusty city the army turned its guns on mobs of rioting civilians. Casualties mounted into the thousands. Though the full toll remained uncertain because of censorship and disorganisation in the world's most densely populated corner (1,400 people per sq. ml.) at week's end some estimates had 2,000 dead. Even if President Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan is prepared to accept casualties of a geometrically greater magnitude, the outcome is likely to be the final breakup of East Pakistan and the painful birth of a new nation named Bangla Desh (Bengal State).

The indistinct battle lines reflected the ethnic and cultural divisions that have beset Pakistan since its creation as a Moslem homeland when British India was partitioned in 1947. Two predominantly Moslem areas that used to be part of India became a new country—the two part separated by 1,000 miles of Indian territory. Thus though 80,000 West Pakistani soldiers were on hand to keep order in East Pakistan last week, their supply bases were 1,000 miles away and most food and ammunition had to be carried 3,000 miles

around the coast of India. The troops, mostly tall, fierce Punjabis and Pathans were surrounded in East Pakistan by a hostile population of 78 million Bengalis. The civil war and it could be called no less promised to be long and bloody. The Bengalis, armed with a few looted guns, spears and often just bamboo staves, were ill-trained for a guerrilla war. But a resistance movement, once organised, might eventually force the West Pakistanis to depart. In a way the struggle evoked haunting memories of the Nigerian civil war of 1967-70, when the federal regime sought justification in the name of national unity and the Biafrans in the name of self-determination.

First Shot

Until last week, Pakistan political leaders seemed on the verge of settling their differences. Then in rapid order, three events carried the nation over the brink of violence. In Chittagong, a mob surrounded West Pakistani troops unloading supply ships. Where the first shots came from is unclear, but when the troops opened fire, 35 Bengalis were killed. Their political leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, called a general strike to protest. Then Yahya Khan outlawed Mujib and his Awami League Party as "enemies of Pakistan" and ordered the armed forces to "do their duty".

In Dacca, army tanks and truckloads of troops with fixed bayonets came clattering out of their suburban base, shouting "Victory to Allah," and "Victory to Pakistan." TIME correspondent Dan Coggin, who, along with other newsmen, was subsequently expelled from Pakistan reported: "Before long, howitzer, tank, artillery and rocket blasts rocked half a dozen scattered sections of Dacca. Tracers arched over the darkened city. The chatter of automatic weapons was punctuated with grenade explosions, and tall columns of black smoke towered over the city. In the night came the occasional cry of 'Joi Bangla (Victory to Bengal)', followed by a burst of machine-gun fire."

The army ordered a strict 24-hour curfew in Dacca, with violators shot on sight. But soon the Free Bengal Revolutionary Radio Centre, probably somewhere in Chittagong, crackled into life. Over the clandestine station, Mujib proclaimed the creation of the "sovereign, independent

Bengali nation," and called on its people to "resist the enemy forces at all costs in every corner of Bangla Desh." The defiant words, however, lacked military substance. At 1.30 a.m. the following day, soldiers seized the Sheikh in his home. Meanwhile, scattered rioting broke out in West Pakistan to protest the prospect of prolonged military rule.

The rupture in Pakistan stemmed from the country's first experiment with true democracy. After it was founded in 1947, Pakistan was ruled on the basis of a hand-picked electorate; Martial Law was imposed after an outbreak of rioting in 1969. During those years, Pakistan was divided by more than geography. Physically and psychologically the 58 million tall, light-skinned people of the West identified with the Islamic peoples who inhabit the area of land stretching as far as Turkey. The smaller, darker East Pakistanis seemed to belong to the world of South and Souths-east Asia. More divisive yet was the fact that the westerners monopolised the government and the army had dominated the nation's commercial life. The East Pakistanis have, over the years, earned the bulk of the country's foreign exchange with their jute exports, yet the majority of schools, roads, new factories and modern government buildings went up in the west.

Eager to relinquish power and return the country to civilian rule, Yahya called elections last December for a National Assembly to write a new constitution. East Pakistanis gave Sheikh Mujib's Awami League 167 of the region's 169 seats and an overall majority in the combined nation's 313 seat assembly chamber. Mujib's platform called for a virtual dismantling of the central government, leaving it in charge of defence and diplomacy and giving the provinces total control of taxes, trade and foreign aid.

Determined to hold the country together, Yahya resisted Mujib's demands for autonomy. Postponing the Constituent Assembly, he flew to Dacca, and in eleven days of meeting with Mujib came almost within sight of a compromise agreement. Yahya, however, demanded that the leader of West Pakistan's majority party, ex-Foreign Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, also be a party to the agreement. Bhutto insisted on heading the foreign ministry while Mujib maintained that with an overall majority, he had the right to form a government without Bhutto.

Mendicant Among Nations

If East Pakistan eventually takes its place in the world community as Bangla Desh, it will have the world's eighth largest population and lowest per capita income ($ 50 a year). It will, inevitably, become a mendicant among nations, and the U.S. will face the need to increase the $ 150 million a year in foreign aid that it now gives to the combined wings of the country. East Pakistan has little industry to speak of, and the world-demand for jute is gradually dropping. West Pakistan will also be left smaller and poorer, though it now has the beginning of an industrial base, consisting primarily of textile mills.

If anyone gains from the sorry split, it will be India, which would face a greatly weakened adversary. Mujib has indicated that he would like to establish friendly relations with New Delhi and, particularly, with the Hindu Bengalis just across the border. He does not share West Pakistan's hostility toward India over the disputed territory of Kashmir. West Pakistan, left with a smaller economic base and without the East's foreign exchange earnings, could not easily maintain as strong an army as the one thoughtful Indians could not regard their neighbour's troubles with too much satisfaction. India itself is, by no means, immune to the centrifugal forces of tribalism and many of its people remember all too well Nehru's recurring nightmare; a subcontinent alternating between periods of political unity and bloody interludes of division and strife.

"Raise Your Hands And Join Me"

When West Pakistani soldiers arrested Sheikh Mujibur ("Mujib") Rahman last week, they gave him a chance to add to an unenviable record. Mujib has already spent more time in prison than any other major Pakistani politician; nine years and eight months.

What makes the Sheikh so unpopular with West Pakistanis is the fact that for more than 23 years he has been the leading advocate of Purbadesh (regional autonomy) for East Pakistan. In last December's elections, Purbadesh was Mujib's chief issue. After visiting the cyclone-devastated Ganges Delta region just

before the general elections, he declared: "If the polls bring us frustration, we will owe it to the million who have died in the cyclone to make a supreme sacrifice of another million lives, if need be, so that we can live as free people."

Grey-haired, stocky and tall for a Bengali (6ft.) the bespectacled Mujib always wears a loose white shirt with a black, sleeveless, vestlike jacket. A moody man, he tends to scold Bengalis like so many children. He was born in the East Bengal village of Tongipara 51 years ago to a middle class landowner (his landlord status accounts for the title of Sheikh). Mujib studied liberal Arts at Calcutta's Islamia College and Law at Dacca University. He lives with his wife Fazilatunnessa, three sons and two daughters in a modest two-storey house in Dacca's well-to-do Dhanmondi section. Except for a brief stint as an insurance salesman, he has devoted most of his time to politics. First he opposed British rule in India. After the subcontinent's partition in 1947, he denounced West Pakistan's dominance of East Pakistan with every bit as much vehemence. "Brothers," he would say to his Bengali followers, "do you know that the streets of Karachi are paved with gold? Do you want to take back that gold? Then raise your hands and join me." He was first jailed in 1948, when he demonstrated against Pakistan Founder Mohammad Ali Jinnah for proclaiming Urdu the new nation's lingua franca.

Yet he has remained, in many respects, a political moderate. He is a social democrat who favours nationalising major industries, banks and insurance companies. In foreign exchange policy too, he follows a middle course. Where West Pakistan's Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto favours closer ties with China and the Soviet Union and is stridently anti-Indian, Mujib would like to trade with India and is regarded as moderately pro-Western.

TIME magazine April 12, 1971
PAKISTAN:
ROUND 1
TO THE WEST.

"There is no doubt" said a foreign diplomat in East Pakistan last week, "that the word massacre applies to the situation." Said another Western official: "It's a veritable bloodbath. The troops have been utterly merciless."

As Round I of Pakistan's bitter civil war ended last week, the winner—predictably was the tough West Pakistan army, which has a powerful force of 80,000 Punjabi and Pathan soldiers on duty in rebellious East Pakistan. Reports coming out of the East via diplomats, frightened refugees and clandestine broadcasts varied wildly. Estimates of the total dead ran as high as 300,000. A figure of 10,000 to 15,000 is accepted by several Western governments, but no one can be sure of anything except that untold thousands perished.

Mass Graves

Opposed only by bands of Bengali peasants armed with stones and bamboo sticks, tanks rolled through Dacca, the East's capital, blowing houses to bits. At the University, soldiers slaughtered students inside the British Council building. "It was like Chengis Khan," said a shocked Western official who witnessed the scene. Near Dacca's marketplace, Urdu-speaking government soldiers ordered Bengali-speaking townspeople to surrender, then gunned them down when they failed to comply. Bodies lay in mass graves at the University, in the old city, and near the municipal dump.

During rebel attacks on Chittagong, Pakistani naval vessels shelled the port, setting fire to harbour installations. At Jessore, in the south-west, angry Bengalis were said to have hacked alleged government spies to death with staves and spears. Journalists at the Petrapole checkpoint on the Indian border found five bodies and a human head near the

frontier post—the remains, apparently, of a group of West Pakistanis who had tried to escape. At week's end there were reports that East Bengali rebels were maintaining a precarious hold on Jessore and perhaps Chittagong. But in Dacca and most other cities, the rebels had been routed.

The army's quick victory, however, did not mean that the 58 million West Pakistanis could go on dominating the 78 million Bengalis of East Pakistan indefinitely. The second round may well be a different story. It could be fought out in paddies and jungles and along river banks for months or even years.

Completing The Rupture

The civil war erupted as a result of a victory that was too sweeping, a mandate that was too strong. Four months ago, Pakistan's President Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan, held elections for a Constituent Assembly to end twelve years of Martial Law. Though he is a Pathan from the West, Yahya was determined to be fair to the Bengalis. He assigned a majority of the assembly seats to Pakistan's more populous eastern wing, which has been separated from the West by 1,000 miles of India since the partitioning of the subcontinent in 1947.

To everyone's astonishment, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his Awami League won 167 of the 169 seats assigned to the Bengalis, a clear majority in the 313 seat assembly. "I do not want to break Pakistan," Mujib told TIME shortly before the final rupture two weeks ago. "But we Bengalis must have autonomy so that we are not treated like a colony of the western wing." Yahya resisted Mujib's demands for regional autonomy and a withdrawal of troops. Mujib responded by insisting on an immediate end to Martial Law. Soon the break was complete. Reportedly seized in his Dacca residence at the outset of fighting and flown to West Pakistan, Mujib will probably be tried for treason.

All Normal

West Pakistanis have been told little about the fighting. ALL NORMAL IN EAST was a typical newspaper heading in Karachi last week. Still, they seemed solidly behind Yahya's tough stand. "We can't have our flag defiled, our

soldiers spat at, our nationality brought into disrepute," said Pakistan Government Information Chief, Khalid Ali. "Mujib, in the end, had no love of Pakistan."

Aware that many foreigners were sympathetic to the Bengalis, Yahya permitted the official news agency to indulge in an orgy of paranoia. "Western press reports prove that a deep conspiracy has been hatched by the Indo-Israeli axis against the integrity of Pakistan and the Islamic basis of her ideology," said the agency.

The Indian government did, in fact, contribute to Pakistan's anxiety. Although New Delhi denied that India was supplying arms to the Bengali rebels, the Indian Parliament passed a unanimous resolution denouncing the "carnage" in East Pakistan. India's enthusiasm is hardly surprising in view of its long standing feud with the West Pakistanis and the brief but bloody war of 1965 over Kashmir. But Western governments urged New Delhi to restrain itself so as not to provoke West Pakistan into making an impulsive response.

Hit And Run

For the time being, West Pakistan's army can probably maintain its hold on Dacca and the other cities of the East. But it can hardly hope to control 55,000 sq. ml. of countryside and a hostile population indefinitely. The kind of Bengali terrorism that forced the British Raj to move the capital from Calcutta to Delhi in 1911, may well manifest itself again in a growing war of hit-and-run, sabotage and arson. In modern times, the East Bengalis have been best known to foreigners as mild-mannered peasants, clerks and shopkeepers, perhaps the least martial people on the subcontinent. But in their support of an independent Bangla Desh (Bengal State), they have displayed a fighting spirit that could spell lasting turmoil for those who want Pakistan to remain united. As Mujib often asked his followers rhetorically: "Can bullets suppress 78 million people ?"

NEWSWEEK April 12, 1971
PAKISTAN
DEATH OF AN IDEAL

They were long on defiance and short on firepower, a scraggly band of impoverished Bengali peasants armed mainly with picks, clubs and bamboo sticks. But they claimed that they had trapped a force of more than 1,000 government troops in a cantonment 2 miles north-west of the East Pakistani city of Jessore. And now, the Bengalis swore that they would continue to besiege the encircled federal garrison until the Punjabi soldiers from West Pakistan died from starvation. "We have the soldiers surrounded, and they cannot get out to get food," one rebel told NEWSWEEK'S Tony Clifton excitedly. "Those bloody buggers are starving and will surely die. They must die:"

That glimpse of the continuing fury and hatred that is racking East Pakistan came last week when Clifton slipped across the Indian border into East Pakistan for a day's tour of some nearby villages. Otherwise, with East Pakistan clamped under tight censorship and with all foreign correspondents banned, the news blackout on Pakistan's civil war was almost totally effective. And a flood of conflicting and uncomfirmed rumours poured into neighbouring India to add to the communications confusion.

From all indications, foreign governments were experiencing similar problems in obtaining solid information on the East Pakistan situation. In Washington Sen. Edward Kennedy said that reports received by his refugee subcommittee told of "indiscriminate killing, the execution of dissident political leaders and students and thousands of civilians suffering and dying every hour of the day". While Kennedy did not identify his source, State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey promptly denied that the Nixon Administration was suppressing reports from Dacca and declared that it was "impossible to estimate a reliable set of facts regarding recent events and

to assess their consequences". Nonetheless, at the end of the week, the U.S. arranged with Pakistan International Airlines to evacuate dependents of American diplomatic officials in East Pakistan.

Protest

While the U.S. remained cautiously noncommittal on the events in Pakistan no such restraints were observed in India. There, Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi condemned the Pakistani army assault on East Bengal as "the systematic decimation of people which amounts to genocide". Day after day Indian newspapers splashed lurid headlines across their front pages describing fierce battles and bloody atrocities in East Bengal. In turn, the Islamabad government in West Pakistan accused the Indian Government and press of spreading false and baseless news reports. And with officials of the two governments exchanging protest notes all last week, the long-standing enmity between India and Pakistan was in no danger of moderating.

If Indian reports that 7,00,000 people may have perished in the East Pakistani fighting seemed wildly exaggerated, the Pakistani Government claim that order and calm prevailed throughout East Pakistan seemed equally improbable. From fragmentary reports it appeared that the federal army was, in fact, in command of most major cities, but control of the countryside remained in doubt. "The troops can make sallies from cantonments and they occasionally do because they have concentrated firepower", correspondent Clifton reported. "However, they dare not spend much time away from base for fear of ambush and must return before dark. Their policy seems to be to go on short terror raids to cow the population into surrender. The question is whether the rebels can hold out until the monsoon comes in a month or so when the weather will make the roads impassable".

Brooding

The civil strife in East Pakistan meanwhile, seems hardly to have touched the consciousness of Pakistanis in the western sector more than 1,000 miles away across Indian territory. On the surface at least NEWSWEEK'S Milan J. Kubic found that life in West Pakistan moved along at a

business as usual pace. But Kubic also discovered a deep sense of brooding among intellectuals and politicians who saw the end of the ideals upon which Pakistan was founded 23 years ago. "When we were building this country, the only argument we had for dismembering the Indian subcontinent was our desire to build a home where all of its Moslems would feel free and equal," an elder statesman in Lahore remarked sadly. "That ideal is now dead, and the Pakistan which we conceived has gone out of existence".

The Awakening Of A Peole

Early last month, when riots erupted in East Pakistan, NEWSWEEK correspondent Loren Jenkins flew to Dacca to cover the Bengali struggle for national autonomy. When civil war flared up and the Pakistani Army put the region under total censorship, Jenkins, along with all other foreign newsmen, was expelled from the country. On his return to Beirut last week, Jenkins filed this personal report on East Pakistan's tragic ordeal:

He stood under a hot noon sun, beads of sweat clinging to his forehead around the edge of his slicked-back grey hair. His eyes were red from fatigue, but his face glowed with pride and hope. Only minutes before, a mob of students from the Dacca Medical School had swirled through the green iron gates into the garden of his modest home in the Dacca suburb of Dhanmondi. The impassioned young people shouted "Joi Bangla" (Victory to Bengal") to demonstrate their support for Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, 51 year old leader of East Pakistan's 75 million people. His spirits soaring, Mujib (as he is called by everyone in East Pakistan) turned to our group of foreign correspondents in his garden and spoke with excitement: "My people are united, they cannot be stopped. Do you think machine guns can really extinguish the spirit and the soul of my people ?"

Only 36 hours after Mujib uttered those words, Pakistan's army dominated by the Punjabis of West Pakistan, suddenly weighed in with its own ruthless answer, with bloody and sometimes indiscriminate use of its massive firepower the army won the first round. And with Mujib's fate in doubt (he was variously reported to be under army arrest or safe in hiding), East Pakistan's brief fighting for independence was

smashed for the moment at least. But the memory of that experience, the amazing unity of purpose that it forged among Bengalis, will linger on, growing apace with the bitter resentment that must inevitably flow from the federal army's outright occupation of East Pakistan. For last month in Bangla Desh the "Bengal Nation" as Mujib's supporters renamed East Pakistan, there occurred a strange and powerful awakening of a people who have been exploited, reviled, humiliated and cheated by the Punjabi minority since Pakistan was founded more than 23 years ago.

In a sense, credit for this awakening must go to President Mohammed Yahya Khan, who forced the showdown by cancelling last month's scheduled opening of the newly elected National Assembly, in which Mujib's Awami League had won a majority. Seeing Yahya's sudden action as yet another Punjabi maneuver to deny East Pakistan's aspirations for greater autonomy, Bengali nationalists clashed with federal troops in the trappings of an independent state. Overnight, the green and white flag of Pakistan seemed to disappear in Dacca, in its place rose a new Bengali flag, designed by Dacca University students, a bottle-green banner bearing a red circle and, within the circle a yellow map of East Pakistan.

Compromise

The nerve centre of East Pakistan's ad hoc government was Mujib's home where the pipe-smoking leader met with all comers in his sparsely furnished saloon. Ironically, as independence fever mounted throughout Bangla Desh, it was Mujib who sought to moderate the passions. Aware that any unilateral declaration of independence would bring down the wrath of the army, Mujib desperately sought a compromise that would give Bengal the autonomy his people demanded while preserving at least a semblance of Pakistani national unity as the army demanded. Though few people said so openly, Mujib was the last hope that Pakistan's two distant and disparate wings might achieve some kind of accommodation.

What finally undid Mujib's efforts was the supercilious attitudes of the West Pakistanis, especially the Punjabis and Pathans who dominate the army and who have been nurtured on impassioned patriotism and cliches about the inferiority of

Bengalis. To the West Pakistanis Mujib and the Awami League were in open rebellion, even though Mujib was, in fact, the leader of the nation's majority political party. What mattered above all to the westerners was the preservation of Pakistan's unity and integrity. There are, of course, valid arguments for keeping a nation united; it usually makes economic, diplomatic and military sense. But the enmity between Pakistan's two wings, separated by more than 1,000 miles of Indian territory, had become so virulent as to reduce such notions of unity to mere fiction.

Terror

When the army decided to strike, it attacked without warning. Truckloads of troops spread out through Dacca under the cover of darkness with orders to use maximum force to stamp out all resistance. Houses were machine-gunned at random; tanks firing on the apparent whim of their commanders, clanged through the streets. It was a blatant exercise in terror and vengeance. There can never be any excuse for the sort of firepower we saw and heard being directed against unarmed civilians. There can be no excuse for the merciless burning of the shanty homes of some of the world's most impoverished people.

And we had already seen too much to suit the Pakistani Army. "You must pack and be ready to go in a half hour" Major Saddiq, the army's uninformative Public Relations Officer, told all the foreign correspondents in Dacca. "Are we being expelled ?" I asked, "I would not use that words", he replied "But you are all leaving."

Two hours later, we were herded into four army trucks and taken under guard to Dacca's airport, where we were searched and most of our notes and films confiscated. A Pakistan civilian jetliner flew us to Karachi in West Pakistan, where we were searched again. My type-writer and radio were dismantled and two rolls of film I had hidden in the radio's battery compartment were seized. I was then taken into another room and stripped and a packet of film that I was carrying in my underwear was taken. "You will have only your memory left", a police official chortled cheerfully.

Unity

That I do have I can still recall the sight of men, women and children hacking down trees and tearing up construction sites to build barricades to hamper the army's movements. Bullets fired into darkened homes were answered with cries of "Bengalis Unite!" And earlier, before the army crackdown, I had visited a village where volunteers, directed by ex-noncoms from the old British Indian Army, were training for guerrilla resistance. "We will cut roads, stop ferries, destroy bridges." One resistance leader told me, "and we will get guns from our enemy." Perhaps his prophecy will not come true. But if a guerrilla war does engulf the East Pakistan countryside, the struggle for Bangla Desh promises to be long and bloody. Whatever happens to Mujib himself, such a conflict will be the final test of his contention that machine-guns cannot kill the spirit of his people.

DETROIT Free Press, April 14, 1971
PAKISTANI REBELS ASK RECOGNITION

NEW DELHI—(UPI)—The secessionist government of Bangla Desh proclaimed its sovereignty in East Pakistan on Tuesday and appealed to "all democratic countries" for recognition and assistance in the civil war with West Pakistan.

The proclamation, broadcast by the rebel Free Bengal Radio and monitored here said the capital of the Bangla Desh (Bengali Nation) government would be Chuadanga, a small town 10 miles from the border with India.

West Pakistani troops reportedly were concentrating on the capture of major urban centres as they continued to crush the rebellion.

A note from communist Chinese Premier Chou En-lai pledging Peking's support to the Pakistan Government of President Agha Mohammed Yahya Khan brought response from Karachi and New Delhi on Tuesday.

In Karachi, seat of Yahya's military government, a source said Chou's message was a direct warning to India to stay out

of the civil war in East Pakistan, which is situated along India's eastern border 1,000 miles from West Pakistan.

Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said, however, that Chou's note would have no effect on India's officially announced position of solidarity with the rebels.

Asked if India would recognize the secessionist government of Bangla Desh, Mrs. Gandhi said "the matter will receive due consideration."

THE OBSERVER London, April 18, 1971
THE FADING DREAM OF BANGLA DESH

[Colin Smith, the first British newspaperman to reach Dacca since the foreign Press was expelled, reports on his hazardous journey to East Pakistan's capital. He was accompanied by one Mr. Abdul Rashid who acted as guide up to Dacca.]

CALCUTTA, 17 April: Troops from West Pakistan, loyal to General Yahya Khan, the country's military ruler, are now rolling up the map of Bangla Desh. They have ended, for the time being, Bengali dreams of secession and freedom in East Pakistan.

Inspite of their passionate hopes, the unwarlike Bengalis have been no match for the Frontier soldiers from the West —traditionally the best and most ruthless warriors on the Indian subcontinent.

But after a 200-mile journey through the tragic landscape of Bangla Desh, I am sure that from now on President Yahya will hold his eastern province only by force and that his rule will be harassed by continual resistance, however, ill-organised and futile it may be. The Bengalis will never forget or forgive the happenings of the past few weeks.

At about lunch time on Good Friday, I reached Dacca, the occupied capital of East Pakistan, isolated from the rest of the world on the orders of Yahya Khan. With me was Romano Cagnoni, an Italian freelance photographer based in London.

We had taken four days to travel the 100 miles there from the Indian border in jeeps, trucks, ox-carts, canoes, and for one memorable three-mile stretch—by pony. Apart from an Italian newsman shot through the chest during the fighting on 25 March and too weak to be expelled with the other foreign reporters, we were the first foreign journalists in the city for over a fortnight. Cagnoni had hidden his cameras in two assorted biscuits packets. We wore clean short-sleeved shirts, borrowed from a missionary, in order to lend more credibility to our claim that we were technicians working for the Water and Power Development Authority.

What we saw in Dacca, and in the countryside in the week we spent travelling to and from it, convinced us that there would be no popular uprising in the capital for the moment. Memories of what the soldiers' guns can do are too recent.

Hiding Arms

The war is now really coming to the end of its first phase —the national struggle, when patriotism over-rode all political considerations and Awami Leaguer and Maoist fought, in theory anyway, shoulder to shoulder against a common foe. The second phase is just beginning: a classic guerrilla operation waged by the Left with all the eruptions in East Pakistan society this will mean.

Certainly the bourgeois Awami League—whose stock is already low in some areas for its sad inability to defend the people—will be the first to suffer. Some villages are already planning to cache arms, and the Indian police say that there have been virtually no Naxalite incidents in West Bengal these past two weeks because all the Indian Maoist extremists are fighting across the border in East Bengal.

One of our first calls in Dacca was to the British Council, the driver of our baby taxi—a sort of rickshaw pulled by a motor scooter—having mistaken this for the British High Commission. There was a large Union Jack on the door which, we learnt later, had not stopped the four police guards in the building from getting shot.

When we reached the High Commission itself, some tempers were on edge. A senior British official in dark glasses shouted that our arrival would get them all killed and probably ourselves as well.

Another man said that it wasn't in their interests for people in Britain to know what was going on. They knew what was going on and that was all that was necessary.

All telex and telephone communications between Dacca and the outside world are cut and the Commission's staff, most of whom had evacuated their families, had just received their first mail for six weeks.

The only civilian aircraft landing at Dacca, the Boeings belonging to Pakistan International Airlines. Each carries 175 young men who travel in white shirts and khaki trousers, but put on the rest of their uniform when they land. Passengers trying to book PIA flights to Dacca from Karachi are told the aircraft are full of officials.

At the American Consulate, things were a little more relaxed and cold beers and a wall map were produced. Like most of the diplomats we spoke to, the Americans were generally agreed that the West Pakistan troops had killed about 6,000 men, women and children, among them 300 to 500 students.

Some of the West Pakistan units seem to have been possessed by bloodlust directed against the Hindus of East Pakistan, recalling the massacres of 1947, at the time of Partition. The bodies of uncircumcised Hindu men have been found with their penis cut off.

Dacca is an old city of corrugated iron, bamboo, mud and stone. Some parts are so tumbledown that they could probably be shelled for half an hour without making much noticeable difference. One phosphorous grenade or incendiary bullet into one of its bamboo slums and you've burned down a neighbourhood. Twenty-five blocks, perhaps more, were destroyed in this way.

The day after the slaughter, the city's population of crows —dirty, fat, grey birds—seemed to double, and though the bodies were quickly removed, the birds have stayed on, flapping and cawing above the deserted streets.

The normal population of Dacca, city of 800 mosques, is two million; two-thirds have fled to the countryside and those who remain live in terror of the military. The green and white Pakistan flags flying everywhere over the Bengali

city are simply tokens of defeat and surrender. Some Pakistan Army officers do not seem to be restrained by a code of honour any more stringent than one drawn up by Attila, the Hun.

The killing began at the University about one in the morning. The students in bed in their residential halls heard the Army vehicles approaching. Most of them thought the military were coming to make a few more arrests.

A few of the militants made sure that the rifles they had collected from the townspeople over the past few weeks were well hidden. Nobody thought he would have to fight. Nobody had more than a few rounds of ammunition, anyway.

Suddenly searchlights were played on the windows, dazzling the students so that they had to quail and turn away. Then came the Punjabi and Baluchi soldiers with their Chinese AK-47 automatic rifles, smashing the window glass with their butts and spraying the dormitories with fire.

A few students got to the rooftops, where they managed to squeeze off one or two shots with their old bolt-action rifles before they were picked up in the searchlights and killed. Others came running out screaming, with their hands up only to be stood against the walls of their halls and mown down with machine-gun fire from tanks and armoured cars. Survivors were finished off with the bayonet.

Lecturers killed in the attack were : Dr. G. C. Deb, head of the Department of Philosophy ; Dr. A. N. Maniruzzaman, head of the Statistics Department ; and Dr. Obinosor Chackrobharti, reader of the English Department and Provost of Jagannath Hall, the only Hindu residential hall. Five other lecturers, whose names I was not able to collect, are also thought to be dead. Dr. Innas Ali, head of the Physics Department, is said to be seriously injured.

Resistance at the H.Q. of the East Pakistan Rifles (border police) and city police stations were bloody, but short-lived. Even so, the West Pakistanis are said to have been surprised at the ferocity of the fighting. The races who formed the elite of Britain's Indian Army now live in West Pakistan and share the Imperial Englishman's contempt for the artistic little Bengalis, who usually manage to kill people only when they are scared or angry, as they are now.

Rape, Loot And Murder After Dark

"The Army has taken its licks, too, one diplomat told us. At a place called Kushtia—a railway town on the banks of the Ganges—the military paid dearly for underestimating the enemy when they split up a company of about 80 Baluchi infantry, stationing some in the automatic telephone exchange, some in the police station and some in other places. Vastly outnumbered, the groups were hacked to pieces one at a time. Most of them fought to the death.

Strolling through the crowded bazars of Dacca, with our guides constantly trying to stop curious crowds from gathering round us and attracting the attention of Army patrols, Radio Pakistan's claims of 'business as usual' seemed reasonable enough. We came across some gutted buildings, but by European standards of devastation the damage was trifling.

Only when we reached the newer, central part of the city did we see the machine-gun posts at every crossroads and rows of empty houses in the Hindu districts, where some of the worst killing is said to have taken place in the sacred name of Islam.

But even the areas where the heaviest fighting took place have been tidied up with astonishing speed. Only fresh horrors—like the layers of rotting bodies discovered by the staff of the Intercontinental Hotel in the city tip along the Narayanganj road—give some idea of the true picture.

There is a shortage of almost everything, from kerosene to food. Prices of some goods have almost doubled. The city's Holy Family Hospital, run by American missionaries, closed down a week ago when its stocks ran out.

The tanks have left the city for the moment. Apparently they went through it so many times that their tracks wore out and they had to be carried off on transporters. The curfew has been relaxed until 9 p.m. but most citizens consider it unsafe to walk the streets after dark because West Pakistani soldiers have taken to robbing people of their watches and wallets at gunpoint.

During the day, troops patrol the streets in jeeps and trucks. There are also some armed Bihari volunteers rushing about in commandeered vehicles. If the West Pakistanis are

ever forced out of Bangla Desh, then, in the name of humanity, they should take the Biharis with them, otherwise the Bengalis will surely massacre them.

These Urdu-speaking Muslims from the Indian State of Bihar came to East Pakistan as refugees in 1947, to escape Hindu persecution during the Partition troubles. The Biharis, mostly traders, soon took over vacant shops left by Hindus who had run the other way. Now the Biharis have repaid Bengali hospitality by acting as scouts and guides for the West Pakistanis, who are also Urdu-speaking and with whom they feel a greater solidarity.

There are Army checkpoints everywhere in Dacca, though, luckily, in most cases only the officers can understand English. A soldier stopped me outside the Dacca Improvement Trust offices and demanded identity papers. He accepted my passport as good enough though it had no entry stamp for East Pakistan. It was a long moment.

A 19 year old student told me he was stopped on his bicycle by an aggressive young Baluchi, about his own age, who demanded to know why he wasn't flying the Pakistan flag from his handlebars. The soldier eventually let him go when he declared his willingness to have Pakistan written in capital letters in blood on his shirt. 'I told the Baluchi I didn't have a knife myself and offered him my arm for his bayonet. He let me go.'

Now that the fighting is over in the capital, West Pakistani soldiers have taken to entering houses after dark to rape, loot and murder. Girls are sometimes spared if they can recite Muslim prayers. Proof of circumcision is demanded from the men.

A European who took us to his bungalow for a drink pointed to a house across the road and said that in there were the bodies of four Hindus including two children, who had been shot the night before.

We started our journey to Dacca from the Indian border town of Krishnagar. Here we met some Indian West Bengali supporters of the Mukti Fouj, the Liberation Army. They were taking drums of petrol up to the border in pre-war three-wheeler German pick-up vans flying the red, green and gold banner of Bangla Desh.

From the trucks the fuel was transferred to some bamboo ox-carts which trekked off with their load to the East Pakistan village of Kusumpur. We went with them. There were no border checks and only a conical border stone indicated that we had crossed the Radcliffe Line.

There are stories of Indian ammunition going over in bottles of plasma and of companies of the Indian Border Security Force going across disguised as East Pakistan Rifles personnel—not difficult, because they both wear old British-style uniforms and would need only to change their shoulder flashes.

I asked the West Bengalis we went in with, what they were going to do, and they said they had just come to show their support. Sure enough, after an hour they left us and turned back towards India. Crossing the border at all is a tremendously emotional thing for a Bengali of either side, because since the 1965 war it has been sealed off.

Our first night we spent at a police station where they had posted perimeter guards and thrown camouflage nets over their vehicles. After the confusion we had witnessed during the fighting at Jessore the week before, it all looked very promising. Later we were to learn that the efficiency of the Liberation Army usually depended on the distance it was away from any actual fighting. In this case Jessore was about 20 miles down the road.

All the way to Dacca our progress was impeded by Bengali hospitality. As any *Sangbadik* (news carrier) who has been in the area these past weeks will testify, the villagers rarely let the stranger escape without giving him food and drink and a few speeches about fighting to the last drop of their blood.

Even a Baluchi prisoner in a village near Kushtia was offered juice from a *Dab* (green coconut) before they killed him.

He said that he had a small son and that President Yahya had made him come and fight. But one man said that he had a small son, too, and now he was dead. They told him to pray and he made his peace with Allah. Then he opened his shirt and bared his chest and the villagers dug their spears in here, here and here."

For a while, we followed the route taken by a West Pakistan motorised column 48 hours before: there were burnt huts on either side of the road, and in the glass booth of a filling station office near the village of Kaliganj we counted 32 bullet holes.

In some towns we were taken to see whiskery old men with swagger sticks shouting commands in English to squads of youths learning their left from their right as they drilled in columns of threes. Then they would amble off under the trees, where another old soldier began naming the parts of a 25 year old Lee-Enfield rifle.

'We've Got A Lot To Kill'

But at the market town of Jhenida we met Captain Mahbubuddin—a 26 year old former assistant superintendent of police. He was tall for a Bengali and looked a bit of a playboy with the lanyard of his police revolver threaded through the collar of a buttoned-down shirt. He is officially credited with starting resistance in his area. As soon as he heard of the Army's attack in Dacca, he opened his armoury and handed out the rifles.

He had a nice style, flopping his feet up into a leather-backed armchair in the local government offices where he had set up his headquarters and saying: 'Those bastard Punjabis and those bastard Biharis—we've got a lot to kill.' I asked him where he learnt his excellent English and he came out with some familiar Maoist phrases about his country being exploited for 200 years, a legacy of the imperialistic yoke.

His men were armed with anything from 12-bore shotguns to AK assault rifles, with which the East Bengal Regiment had been re-equipped. They had dug L-shaped slit trenches against air attack and stood out as being a thoughtful, well organised bunch.

For the first 90 miles of the trip—up to the Ganges fishing village of Goalundo—wooden bridges had been burnt down, roads blocked with freshly felled trees, and wide anti-tank ditches dug deep into the tarmac highways. At times we had to detour for miles across dry paddy fields—an operation the

Army will not be able to repeat in June when the monsoon starts in earnest.

We saw our first sign of Pakistan Army air activity as we crossed the Ganges from Goalundo to Bilashpur in a packed old motor launch steered by a white-bearded captain who sat cross-legged on a bench behind the wheel. When we were in midstream, an Army helicopter—it looked like a Westerland Wessex—came quite close and we joined the captain in the wheelhouse.

Coming back, a five-hour journey in a canoe, we stayed under the curved bamboo shelter all the time. When we reached Faridpur, we heard that Goalundo had been bombed. We went straight there and found that it had, in fact, been straffed with cannon and rocketfire. The villagers showed us bits of aluminium from the rockets. The attack had taken place at about two in the afternoon on Easter Sunday. Four people were killed and eight wounded.

Like the corpses in this place overnight the huts looked as if they had been dead for three months : sagging roofs and ashes and an occasional cheap moulded rubber sandal of the kind most Bengali peasants wear when they're not barefoot. There were flies, everywhere, because some of the villagers had received direct hits from the cannon shells and bits of them were still in the ground.

A Mukti Fouj man brought out a grey-faced youth with a blanket round his shoulders and lifted his shirt to show a small hole in his side where a piece of **shrapnel** had penetrated. He also had a bandage around a head wound. We put him in the back of a pick-up truck loaned to us by the Faridpur branch of the Awami League and took him to the hospital at Rajbari, where the nursing sisters in their white caps and habits looked surprised to see us. On the way we picked up half a dozen unarmed East Pakistan policemen and suddenly realised what a tempting target that blob of khaki at the back might make for an aircraft.



Mother watching her child die of cholera.
Time : 2-8-71.

Bengal: the limited option open to Pakistan's President

Is there a bloodless way out for Yahya Khan?



Consequences of political error: Bengali refugees in monsoon mud.

Daily Times : 20-7-71.

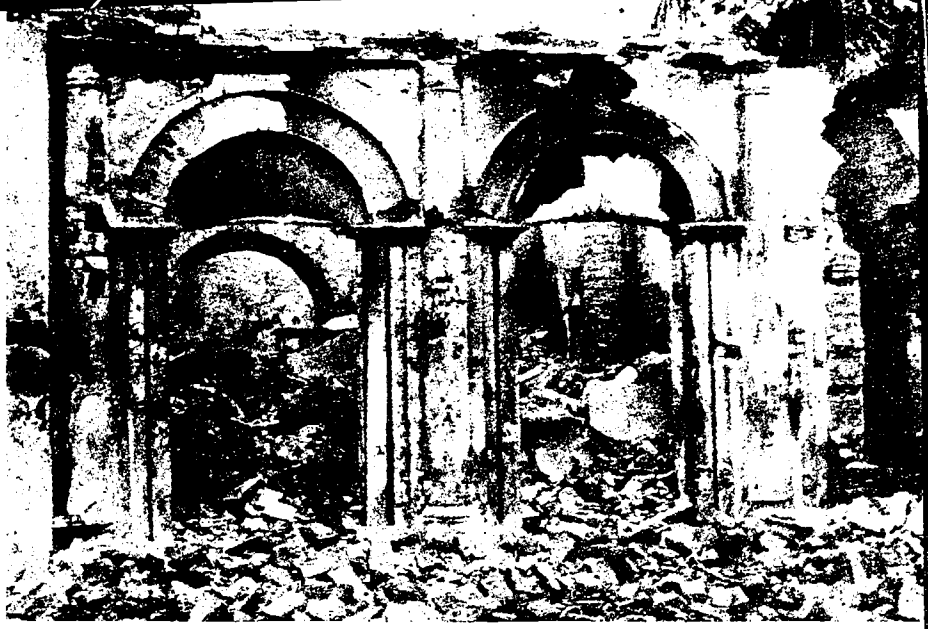


Zohra : raped and killed by Pakistani soldiers ; not torn to bits by dogs.
From a Booklet published by Calcutta University.





The ruthless Pak Army spares none—an improvement on Attila the Hun



A mosque demolished by heroic soldiers of Islamic state :
From a Booklet published by Calcutta University.





Bengali refugees flying from Kushtia.
The Observer : 18-4-71

DAILY TELEGRAPH London, 19th April 1971

Nicholas Tomaline, after seeing the horror of the East Pakistani fighting, visits the Pruce Modern capital in West Pakistan. He finds a complacent refusal to recognise the tragedy and its social and economic repercussion.

FAR FROM THE HOLOCAUST

General Yahya Khan, President of Pakistan and C-in-C of the Pakistan army is a good man and intelligent soldier. It was simple sense of duty (and catastrophic intelligence misinformation) which persuaded him three weeks ago to order his troops to restore the law and order in Pakistan.

Because he is a decent, orthodox armyman, who acted according to orthodox army logic, General Yahya thinks he has succeeded and can now continue as leader of a united nation. He is still unaware that his attempted coup was the worst military crime of the recent years and probably the biggest political blunder.

Islamabad, the West Pakistani capital, is full of noble looking soldiers like Yahya. They stride around the orderly streets with a fine proud bearing; they play polo as if nothing had happened to disturb their sport. It is strange to arrive here and see them, so remote from the piles of dead in East Pakistan.

The officers' wives complain that the emergency has caused the cancellation of the Islamabad gardens competition —just when the spring borders were looking their neatest. In such crisp, disciplined surroundings it gradually becomes a matter of removing some unfortunate untidyness even if they are your countrymen.

Apart from the soldiers, Islamabad is populated by ordinary West Pakistani citizens who read daily censored newspapers about happiness, tranquility and joy in the East and therefore agree that law and order operation was a

great success, and the foreign community who read other newspapers and therefore disagree.

Among Islamabad people who knew there was a civil war on, diplomats for instance, I found suprising unanimity. They believe that Pakistan, as a nation built of two halves separated by geography but united by religion, is finished. East Pakistan is doomed to many years of starvation, chaos and bloodshed. West Pakistan is doomed to an economic crisis of considerable seriousness. The two must inevitably break apart.

"Sheer bloody stupidity" was the undiplomatic phrase one diplomat was driven to use; even General Yahya's best friend in the diplomatic corps, man who strives to explain, if not to justify, what made the general act as he did, are beginning to use words like "dementia" to describe the unwillingness to recognise the horror of what he has done, and its consequences must be.

Of course, Yahya is not only feeling in this terrible story. The vacillating, neurotic personality of the East Pakistani leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, can also be partly blamed. During the crucial negotiation Sheikh Mujibur Rahman seemed almost to prefer the idea of prison to the awesome responsibilities of being Prime Minister of Pakistan. Nothing else explains the tame manner in which he awaited in Dacca on March 25. At all events he achieved his wish. People in Islamabad who know such things say Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is now tucked away in comfortable cells at the Attock Fort 50 miles from Islamabad.

A real heavy is Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, West Pakistan's political leader. There is evidence that Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto deliberately sabotaged the negotiations between General Yahya and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. He did so to protect West Pakistani interest—perhaps with the connivance of the army but it was also obvious that he did not welcome the prospect of playing second fiddle to Sheikh Mujib in a united Pakistan.

Also part of this stage army of the bad are the hawkish army generals and Punjabi civil servants who surrounded Yahya and are supposed by some to have pushed him into the bloody action to preserve their privilege and prosperity.

Five names are canvassed for places in this cable. There is Lt.-General Tikka Khan, Martial Law Administrator of East Pakistan. He directed troops during their first night killing in Dacca. There is Lt.-General Pirzada, Principal Secretary to Yahya, Pirzada is a Martial Law expert; he drafted the Martial Law Regulations by which Pakistan is ruled. He is an articulate and intelligent man and Yahya has come to rely more and more on him to rationalise his actions before and after they happen. Some call him the de facto Prime Minister of Pakistan.

There is Omar, as Chairman of the National Security Council, the top military spy-master. Omar is a hawk among hawks, totally impatient of Bengali secessionism.

There is Major-General Akbar, chief of the Inter-Service Intelligence Corps. Omar and Akbar between them must have provided their C-in-C with disastrous (perhaps even deliberately distorted) advice that Bengali nationalist would quickly collapse after one violent military assault.

Finally, there is M.M. Ahmed the one civilian really close to General Yahya. Mr. Ahmed is chairman of the Pakistan Planning Commission which runs the economy of the country. He is a Punjabi patiently patriotic towards his religion and less so towards Bengal. If there was any justice in the charge that Pakistan's economy has been rigged to favour the Punjab at the expense of the East, then Mr. Ahmed has played a part.

Did this man force Yahya into his military adventure? And do they still keep him pioneer of an anti-Bengali crusade? I don't entirely think so. More likely, their role is simply to bolster the General's bluff Punjabi impulses and to insulate him from unwelcome criticisms by foreigners and intellectuals.

Indeed it would be dangerous to say they dominate him. For General Yahya displaying the more childish aspect of his simple, extrovert nature, results nothing more than any allegation that he is the puppet of his advisers. It was tactless questioning along these lines by British journalists at the time of the East Pakistan's flood that inspired Yahya's obsessive dislike of newspaper reporters.

Brash youngman had been disrespectful to a distinguished head of state. He brooded on it, and complained about it to

Englishman, high and low, on frequent occasions. When 35 journalists found themselves trapped in the Dacca Intercontinental Hotel on March 25, General Yahya combined pleasure with business and shipped them out of the country away from the embarrassing going on with maximum roughness.

India, too, played usual dubious game of saying and doing everything and nothing at once. News reports on India and in the Indian Press about fighting almost as ridiculous as the reports in the Pakistani Press. As such they are God's gift to Islamabad and Bhutto's relentless anti-Indian campaign. But India has not invaded East Pakistan, nor done any of the overwhelming things that the Chinese allege.

Everytime Yahya's propaganda chiefs are asked about the civil war, they responded with a stream of abuse about Indian infiltrators attacking loyal Pakistanis. They never have been able to show actual proof that more than two Indian soldiers have crossed the border and even this may be old one's left over from the Indo-Pak war. (The trouble of course, is too many chiefs and not enough Indians—but that's by the by).

Looking back on the long infinitely complicated history of the negotiation between General Yahya and Mujib, the General's friends say that—given the contrasting characters of Yahya, Mujib and Bhutto, things rolled forward with the inexorability of a Greek tragedy. The Bengalis behaved like Bengalis at their worst, Punjabis likewise.

The general critics take less philosophical view. They say Yahya was an orthodox military dictator who last year began to reintroduce the parliamentary democracy, but when democracy caused him trouble, withdrew it and used bullets to those who objected.

The General's friends say that he would have been happy to hand over power to Sheikh Mujib and agreed to all the famous 6 points of the greater Eastern independence that Sheikh's Awami League demanded. If he disputed, it was only to stop a complete breakaway of East Pakistan, or the equally unpleasant alternative of a counter rebellion in the West. If he stopped talking and started shooting, it was only because he saw the Marxists and hooligans had in fact taken over from the Sheikh.

The General's enemies say he never seriously intended to give up power and the talks were charade. They point out that two of the 6 points giving East Pakistan the right to collect its own taxes and control its own exports could ultimately starve army of money and no President is going to put his soldiers at the mercy of the Bengali tax collector and the politicians. The truth probably lies, between these two extremes. What really scuppered any chance of agreement, however, was the intervention of Mr. Bhutto.

As far back as January Yahya and Mujib had a long series of talks in Dacca to work out what they could do about the election result which gave Mujib an overall majority. Yahya made concessions, and Mujib on his part promised that for at least two years as Prime Minister he would not tamper with the money supply to the army or radically change other economic arrangements.

Yahya was delighted, and on emerging from the conference room pointed at Sheikh Mujib and told reporters, 'This is the man who will be running Pakistan.' Then he went off to shoot birds.

The resulting headlines caused panic and fury in West Pakistan. In Islamabad his advisers descended upon Yahya determinedly, pointing out he had pawned the country's future with only a vague promise from Bengali's most famous prevaricator as a guarantee.

At this point Mr. Bhutto with the clean power to enflame all the West if he wanted, added his private voice to the clamour. No one quite knows what he said. But two things are certain, firstly he did not praise Sheikh Mujib whom he detests, secondly, shortly afterwards General Yahya began quietly moving troops reinforcements into East Pakistan.

By this time it was mid-Feb ; things were growing tenser daily. Sheikh Mujib had won the election, why could'nt he now take power ? His supporters grew more and more bitter and unruly. Yahya promised the National Assembly would meet on March three.

Then Bhutto totally sabotaged even that chance of peace by declaring he, and, his 80 MPs simply would not turn up at the assembly even if it were convened. So even though Yahya was loudly proclaiming his willingness to inaugurate a democracy, half of it would be missing on the opening day.

Many say that Bhutto was in cahoots with the cabal, the army, and even Yahya when he made his veto. It did after all, neatly let the General out of his promise.

Oddly enough the last straw was a series of student riots on Pakistan national day when Yahya, from his conference balcony saw the violent anarchy of a typical Bengali demonstration with Marxist hoodlums waving red flags and trampling on picture of Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan.

Trampling on Jinnah ? It explains much about this simple honourable man that such desecration weighed more with him than any of the other dangers of democracy. Total chaos threatened in East Pakistan, he must stop it. Plans for the military coup were intensified.

Three weeks ago came the big bang, and God knows how many thousands of people have been killed by the West Pakistani army and by Bengalis taking gruesome revenge on Punjabis. It is probable that as the ammunition for the Bangla Desh guerrilla begins to run out, the army will gain the final control of the towns. The monsoon rains, on the other hand, will help the guerrillas. Fighting will continue in some shape or other for months if not years.

The military coup was designed to stop East Pakistan sliding into chaos, race murder, starvation, and alliance with some as yet unchosen communist power. It will, on the contrary, bring all these things about, in a far more extreme forms.

Meanwhile, things are bad in West Pakistan, and getting worse. There has been no trade since the March talks began, and no export of jute from Eastern parts since the war began. No taxes have been collected for a long time. In normal times the West exploits the East by diverting aid money. No one else would buy West Pakistan's cheap cotton clothes and other relatively shoddy goods. Without jute exports there is no foreign exchange to feed the West Pakistan industries.

The war is using up millions of Rupees daily. If the cost of holding down 17 million Vietnamese nearly ruined the American economy what will be cost holding down 75 million Bengalis to the fragile Pakistan economy ?

The foreign aid loans worth over £ 50 million a year— have dried up, because no one will hand over the money to a

country half in chaos. The loan consortium made up of USA, Britain, France, West Germany, Japan and Italy has refused to say if it will hold its scheduled meeting later in April-March, all the diplomatic energy in Islamabad is being expended on furious ticking-off to each ambassadors in turn.

Otherwise, the government machine has stopped functioning because no one knows what is happening and half the civil servants are "Unreliable" men from the East. There is a national budget due to be presented in just over two months time. No one has seriously started to think about it. Everyday talented Bengalis in influential posts are sacked, and untalented inexperienced Punjabis take their place.

At the same time Bengalis in armed forces are causing problems. All Bengali military pilots have been grounded, 24 army officers in East Pakistan have reportedly been court-martialed and the navy, half manned, by Bengali sailors is unsurprisingly in a mutinous state.

For this and many other reason, and it is generally agreed that West Pakistan is headed for a virtual economic collapse within months. The result will be in many ways permanently damaging than the carnage in East which as a near-subsistence economy is used to coping with disasters.

It is an unpleasant prospect, and obviously something drastic must be done to stop it. The rest of the world may be held back from frank moral judgment about who is to blame by consideration of diplomatic tact, but it has financial levers to apply, and when applied then the terrible possibility is that General Yahya may ignore these sanctions, however disastrous to his country. Those who have been to remonstrate with him report that he seems to believe only what he wants to believe. He really thinks that law and order operations in East Pakistan is, after some unexpected difficulties, succeeding. He really thinks that only problem now is the dastardly Indian intervention. He believes all these, even though some one must have told him it was invented by his own propaganda machine.

There is something of the mysterious oriental Pasha in Yahya Khan, behind his Sandhurst choice. As a Moslem he is finding something intoxicating in retreating into a ferocious isolation. The more the infidel would protest, the more epic the lonely struggle becomes. (The leaders of West Pakistan

may even prefer to bring everything in glorious destruction than undergo the humiliation of admitting they were wrong).

To discover this in Islamabad, after the all-too-real courage of East Pakistan, it seems even more histrionic—like an old bad film, or a wilder passage from James Flecker. The romantic band of noble warriors, crying defiance to the infidel the foreigner, and all Bengalis plunged over the cliff as their white chargers waving their sabres to the flash in the setting sun. Such an end has a poetry but it is a pity that a country, and 119 million people have to go over the cliff at the same time.

TIME Magazine April 19, 1971

PAKISTAN

THE BATTLE OF KUSHTIA

Fierce fighting raged last week in East Pakistan as Bengali townspeople and peasants resisted the "occupation army" of 80,000 West Pakistani soldiers. Reports have indicated that as many as 200,000 civilians have been killed by the heavily armed West Pakistani troopers. But soldiers have also suffered severe casualties at the hands of irate peasants. This army controlled the capital of Dacca, the vital ports of Chittagong and Khulna, and several other towns. But a ragtag resistance movement called the Bangla Desh Mukti Fouj (Bengal State Liberation Forces) was reportedly already in control of at least one-third of East Pakistan, including many cities and towns. West Pakistan authorities have almost completely succeeded in obscuring the actual details of the fighting from the outside world by expelling all foreign newsmen from East Pakistan. But last week TIME Correspondent Dan Coggins managed to cross the border from India into East Pakistan, where he visited the embattled town of Kushtia (pop. 35,000). After extensive interviews with townspeople and captured West Pakistani troopers, Coggins was able to reconstruct an account of brutality and bravery that took place in Kushtia during the first fortnight of the civil war.

His Report:

Kushtia, a quiet town in the rice-growing district near the broad Ganges, fell into a restless sleep on the night of March 25. Without warning, 13 jeeps and trucks came to a halt outside Kushtia's police station. It was 10.30 on the night the war broke out. Delta Company of the 27th Baluch Regiment had arrived from its base at Jessore cantonment 60 miles to the south. The 147 men of the company quickly disarmed some 500 Bengali policemen without meeting any resistance and then occupied four additional key points: the district police headquarters, the government office building, the VHF radio transmitter and the Zilla school for boys. Most of the sleeping townspeople did not realise what had happened until 5.30 a.m., when jeeploads of soldiers with bullhorns drove through the empty streets announcing that a total curfew was to begin 30 minutes later.

Kushtia remained calm for 48 hours while the curfew was in effect, although seven persons—mostly peasants who arrived in town unaware of what had happened—were shot to death for being found in the streets. The curfew was lifted on the morning of March 28, and the townspeople began to organise a resistance immediately.

That night 53 East Pakistani policemen easily overpowered a handful of soldiers at the police station. Then, fanning out to nearby villages with all the 303 Enfield rifles and ammunition they could carry, the policemen joined forces with 100 college students who were already working for Bangla Desh. The students were teaching the rudiments of guerrilla warfare to local peasants, who were armed only with hatchets, farm tools and bamboo staves. Within two days, the police and students had organised several thousand volunteers and militiamen of the East Pakistan Rifles and laid plans for simultaneous attacks on the five army positions in Kushtia.

At 4.30 a.m. on March 31, a force of some 5,000 peasants and policemen launched a campaign to liberate Kushtia. Thousands of townspeople thronged the streets shouting "Joi Bangla (Victory to Bengal)"! The soldiers apparently panicked at the thought of being engulfed by so many thousands of furious Bengalis. "We were very surprised," lamented Naik Subedar (Senior Sergeant) Mohammad Ayub later, following his capture. "We thought the Bengali forces were

about the size of one company like ourselves. We didn't know everybody was against us."

Instant Death

The Bengali fighters made no suicidal, human-wave assaults at Kushtia as they have done in some places. But the steady drumfire of hundreds of rifles had a relentless effect on the soldiers of Delta Company. By noon, the government building and district headquarters all fell. Shortly before dawn the next day, about 75 soldiers made a dash for their jeeps and trucks and roared away in a blaze of gunfire. Two jeeps were halted almost immediately by surging mobs. The East Pakistanis pulled out the dozen soldiers and butchered them on the spot.

The other vehicles were blocked outside town by fallen-tree barricades and 4-ft. ditches dug across the blackton road. The soldiers managed to shoot down about 50 Bengalis before they were overpowered and hacked to death by peasants. A few soldiers escaped but were later captured and killed.

Before dawn the next day, the last 13 soldiers in Kushtia stole out of the radio building and covered 14 miles on foot before two Bengali militiamen took them prisoner and brought them back to the Kushtia district jail. The 13 were the only known survivors of Delta Company's 147 men. Among the West Pakistani dead was Nassim Waquer, a 29 years old Punjabi who last January had been appointed Assistant Deputy Commissioner at Kushtia. When an angry mob found his body, they dragged it through the streets of the town for half a mile.

Little Headway

Next day the Pakistan army dispatched another infantry company from Jessore to stage a counter attack on Kushtia. At Bishakali village, halfway to Kushtia, the new company fell into a booby trap set by Bangla Desh forces. Two jeeps in the nine-vehicle army convoy plunged into a deep pit covered with bamboo and vines. Seventy-three soldiers were

killed on the spot, and dozens of others were chased down and slain.

All last week, the green, red and golden flags of Bangla Desh fluttered from rooftops, trucks and even rickshas in Kushtia. Bengali administrators were running the region under the local party leader, Dr. Ashabul Haq, 50, a forceful physician who packs a Webly & Scott revolver and a Spanish Guernica automatic. At week's end, two army battalions established an outpost a few miles from Kushtia. They were reported, however, to be making little headway against furious resistance. Even if the soldiers managed to reach Kushtia, the townspeople were more than ready to fight again.

WALL STREET JOURNAL April 21, 1971

A FLICKERING CAUSE

EAST PAKISTANIS PLEDGE TO FIGHT TO THE DEATH BUT MOSTLY THEY DON'T

They Lack Arms, Leadership To Prolong Their Revolt; No Aid By Other Nations

Too Many Patrick Henrys?

By Peter R. Kann

(Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal)

NEAR MEHERPUR, East Pakistan—By ox-cart and by rickshaw, on bicycles and an occasional truck, but mostly by foot, people and soldiers of Bangla Desh—the Bengal Nation are retreating towards the Indian border.

From Meherpur, half a mile further back, come the thump of the West Pakistan army's mortars and the crackle of its small-arms fire.

"Punjabis (West Pakistanis). Bombs, cannon at Meherpur," shouts a group of Bengalis clinging to an India-bound truck that stops only long enough to let the last armed man at this village crossroad climb abroad.

The four-mile trip back to the Indian border is a tour of largely deserted villages. The richer residents of Meherpur had evacuated their town a day before. This day it is mostly villagers who are fleeing; a barefoot, ragged woman leading six children, all with bundles of belongings balanced atop their heads; two men carrying a dismantled bed; an old blind man being led along by what seems to be a seeing-eye-cow.

Waging A Weak War

Back at the Indian border, in and around an Indian military compound, sit 100 or more sullen members of the Bangla Desh army, their insignia ripped off. Also on the Indian side are more than a dozen Bangla Desh jeeps and two recoilless rifles, perhaps the only ones in the Bangla Desh army. A few miles further to the rear in the nearest Indian border town, are clusters of babbling politicians, civil servants and professional men who talk about fighting and dying to the very last man.

Many Bengalis, of course, have been dying since the Pakistan civil war began in March. But, for a variety of reasons not nearly enough have been fighting. As a result, Bangla Desh appears, at this stage, to have waged one of the weakest—and perhaps shortest—revolutionary wars on record.

In less than one month, with fewer than 50,000 men and limited firepower and air support, the army has been able largely to subdue, for the time being, 75 million hostile Bengali people.

The Long Road To Liberation

This isn't to say the cause of Bangla Desh is finished. But if East Pakistan is ever to be independent, it won't happen through the kind of spontaneous-combustion revolution of the past four weeks. Liberation will be won over years, not weeks; by more action and less rhetoric; with guerrilla tactics, not conventional combat; and perhaps by militant leftists rather than idealistic moderates.

Much will also depend on India—whether it will provide arms and border sanctuaries for a protracted liberation war.

In any case, West Pakistan faces serious problems. How to deploy its army of occupation across a large, predominantly rural area, particularly with monsoons coming. How to administer what amounts to a bitter reconquered colony. How to piece together East Pakistan's shattered economy and how to keep East Pakistan from becoming a crippling drain on limited West Pakistani resources. How to deal with India should it decide to become more heavily involved in supporting Bengali resistance.

Pakistan's problems will be compounded if unrest develops among ethnic minorities within West Pakistan or if rival generals and politicians in the West cannot stand together in this crisis.

A Clear-Cut Struggle

In an age of confusing liberation struggles and fuzzy moral causes, the issues at stake in this war seem relatively clear-cut. When England granted its Indian empire independence in 1947, the subcontinent was divided along religious lines rather than by any ethnic or geographic logic. The new Moslem nation of Pakistan was split into two halves, separated by 1,200 miles of Hindu India. The Pakistani nation came to be dominated—politically, economically and militarily—by the Punjabis of West Pakistan, and the more populous Bengalis have felt exploited.

In elections last December for a National Assembly the East Pakistanis bloc-voted overwhelmingly for the Bengali nationalist Awami League of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The League won an absolute majority in the Assembly, meaning power would have swung to Bengali East Pakistan under a democratic regime. Sheikh Mujibur, a somewhat pro-Western moderate socialist, demanded autonomy for the East except in defence and foreign affairs. The politicians and generals of West Pakistan balked, for economic and other reasons.

Under cover of negotiations, West Pakistani troops and military supplies were slipped into East Pakistan. The night

of March 25 these troops struck swiftly and savagely in Dacca, the East Pakistan capital, brutally suppressing Bengali demonstrators. The army took over in Dacca and the port of Chittagong, and the war was on.

In other towns the Bengalis rose in defiance and proclaimed independence. It was a story-book sort of revolution, with thousands of Patrick Henrys issuing courageous calls to arms and thousands of Betsy Rosses sewing little red, green and yellow Bangla Desh flags. The civil service, and East Pakistan EPR (a Bengali military attached to the Pakistan army) joined the liberation, as indeed did Bengalis of every social class and political persuasion. The Bangla Desh flag flew from primitive mud huts as well as from city offices, from ox-carts as well as from jeep. The revolutionary slogan, "Joi Bangla" ("Victory to Bengal"), was shouted by peasant children as well as portly politicians.

An Army Without Arms

But there were things the Bengalis didn't have and didn't do. Except for the militia-men of the East Pakistan Rifles, the liberation army was almost entirely lacking in arms and training. Even the Rifles had only light, old-fashioned weapons. In many areas the Bengalis did little to supplement these arms with homemade weapons like Molotov cocktails or primitive mines.

The Bengalis were surprisingly unprepared for a war that many of them had deemed possible, even likely, for years. They had no effective communication and liaison system—not even by runners—and thus Bangla Desh fortunes differed, and suffered, district by district, village by village. The leadership has been composed largely of Awami League functionaries and civil servants. They have tended to sit in the towns, first emotionally celebrating the liberation of their people and later emotionally bewailing their lack of airplanes, artillery and foreign support. Sheikh Mujibur, now believed to be a captive of the Pakistani army, is typically Bengali. Says one critic, who is also Bengali: "An impossible man. Whenever you ask him a question, he answers with a quotation from Tagore." Tagore was Bengali's greatest writer.

The West Pakistan army, perhaps cowed by the thought of 75 million hostile Bengalis spread across 55,000 square miles (East Pakistan is roughly the size of Arkansas), spent most of the first two weeks of the war holed up in urban military cantonments. But when the army finally began to move, behind air and artillery cover, Bangla Desh offered little opposition.

An Unopposed Army

By late last week Bangla Desh forces were evacuating the towns, and the Pakistani army was rolling down the roads generally unopposed. In some areas there were reports of Bangla Desh leaders and soldiers moving out into the villages to prepare for guerrilla war. But in other places—like Meherpur and additional towns near the border with Indian West Bengal—Bangla Desh forces were simply fleeing into India.

At the Indian border town of Gede, a Bengali school principal, who a week before had been welcoming journalists to the Bangla Desh provisional capital, is taking up residence in an Indian guesthouse. "We will fight to the last of our 75 million people, to the last man," he says.

Another refugee at Gede is perhaps over defeatist but sincere: "The Punjabis are trigger-happy men bent to rule us at whatever the cost. They are killing thousands of our people, but what can we do? We have no arms. The Indians gave us a few guns—duck guns. But the Punjabis aren't sitting ducks. Yesterday we were tilling our land, and today we must be a guerrilla army. How can it be? Some say the monsoon will help us. But how? We have penknives and staves, and we will go through the water—splash, splash, splash. They have planes and cannons and carbines. What can we do?"

Three miles across the border, at the East Pakistan town of Darsana, several score Bangla Desh supporters are sitting in a former police post, worrying each other with conflicting reports about the imminent fall of the provisional capital, Chuadanga, which lies another 10 miles down the road. "Two Pakistani planes have bombed Chuadanga....More than one Bengali has been killed....Punjabi troops are only three miles

from the city....There are no Bangla Desh troops near the town, they have all left already."

"We Will Die"

One politician gives a solemn and sincere speech about the failure of the outside world to come to the aid of Bangla Desh. A small knot of men is watching a medic operate on a pudgy compatriot—a dab of iodine is being applied to a small cut on his left palm. Another local leader is asked what the Bangla Desh forces plan as the opposing army advances. "We will die," he says, and the others grimly nod. But the next day the Pakistan army walked into Chuadanga unopposed.

A constant sad refrain these days from Bangla Desh people is the failure of the outside world to aid them. The expectations of Bangla Desh may have been naive, but even far more practical-minded men would have been disappointed at the world response. No great power has helped the Bengalis, who represent a majority of the Pakistani population and are fighting for independence after having been attacked.

Russia has given Bangla Desh a bit of verbal support—in the form of a call to West Pakistan to stop the killing. On the other hand, Red China, a proponent of civil wars, has given strong verbal backing to West Pakistan.

Only India, Pakistan's neighbour and enemy, has given Bangla Desh firm verbal support. India has permitted limited unofficial aid to flow across its borders into East Pakistan and has let Bangla Desh forces and followers take refuge, at least temporarily. But even India has stopped well short of diplomatic recognition or organized military assistance.

The Threat of Chaos

So far, both India and Pakistan, despite bitter charges and countercharges, seem anxious to avoid a real confrontation. But if either drops its current caution, the chaos of East Pakistan could engulf the whole subcontinent.

Only yards from the Indian border, Bangla Desh held a ceremony in a mango grove at a village called Mujibnagar last Saturday. The provisional government of Bangla Desh was officially presented to the press, a proclamation of independence, was read, and speakers made patriotic addresses.

But glory fades quickly for Bangla Desh. The day after the ceremony, the village is deserted except for a few dozen residents. The reviewing stand still sits under a spreading mango tree, but only several ducks and a goose strut around it.

The memory of glory lives on, however. Back on the Indian side of the border, a Bangla Desh official is still dreaming about the previous day. "It was a wonderful day," he declares. "Seven ministers and 27 eminences. Very good speeches. A fine ceremony."

TIME Magazine April 26, 1971

PAKISTAN

THE PUSH TOWARDS THE BORDERS

Radio Pakistan announced last week that Pakistan International Airlines has resumed its internal flights between the East Pakistan capital of Dacca, and the town of Jessore, formerly a stronghold of rebel resistance. The broadcast failed to note that the PIA Prop Jets were carrying only soldiers and that they were escorted into Jessore Airport by air force Sabre Jets.

It was true, however that the army had taken the offensive in Pakistan's savage civil war. In the early days of fighting, the troops had prudently preferred to remain in their garrison areas, for the most part, until additional men and supplies arrived. Last week they began to push toward the Indian border, hoping to secure the hard top roads by the time the monsoon rains began in late May. If they succeed, they will be able to block any sizable imports of arms and other equipments for the Bangla Desh (Bengal State) resistance fighters.

Naxalite Sympathizers

Despite the heavy cost of the operation (estimated at £ 1.3 million per day) and widespread international criticism, the Government of President Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan seems determined to press for a decisive victory. The U.S. and most other Western countries have thus far maintained a careful neutrality. Washington announced that it has furnished no arms to Pakistan since the fighting began March, 25. Communist China, on the other hand, has strongly supported the Pakistan Government, while India, Pakistan's traditional adversary, has quietly sympathised with the rebels.

The Indians most deeply involved are the West Bengalis who are kinsmen to the East Bengali insurgents. But West Bengali sympathy is tempered by a fear that a prolonged civil war in East Bengal will prove costly to themselves as well. For generation, West Bengal has received a steady flow of refugees from across the border. Now the flow has greatly increased, with an added burden to the state's economy. Among West Bengalis, the most enthusiastic supporters of the East Pakistani cause are Calcutta's urban terrorists, the Maoist Naxalites. Some are said to have slipped across the border with home-made guns and bombs to help the rebels.

Strong Words

Officially, India has tried to maintain calm. Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi declared earlier that India could hardly remain a "silent observer" to the carnage in East Pakistan. But last week, when asked if she would describe the fighting as an "imperial war," she replied sternly, "the use of strong words will not help."

From East Pakistan came reports that the destruction was continuing. Estimates of the numbers of dead ranged to 200,000 or more. In the port city of Chittagong, hundreds of bodies were dumped into the river to be carried away by the tide. Some observers reported a virtual pogrom against East Pakistan's educated leadership, raising the spectre of a region reduced to peasant serfdom. Even the modern jute mills, owned by West Pakistani businessmen, were reported destroyed.

Provisional Government

There was also savagery on the Bengali side. Rebels were reported to be paying off old scores against non-Bengali Moslems, who settled in East Pakistan after the 1947 partition of British India into India and Pakistan. At the town of Dinajpur, most male members of this group were killed and the women taken to make-shift internment camps. Despite the continued absence of their political leader, Sheikh Mujibur ("Mujib") Rahman, who is thought to be in prison in West Pakistan, the rebels announced the formation of a Bangla Desh provisional Government last week. They named Mujib President. One of his colleagues, Tajuddin Ahmed, who is at large in East Pakistan, became Prime Minister. As their provisional capital, the rebels prudently chose the town of Meherpur, which lies a mere four miles from the Indian border.

The Bangla Desh forces are critically short of gasoline and diesel fuel and lack the field communication equipment necessary for organised military activity. They avoided any full-scale engagements in which they would undoubtedly sustain heavy losses. Some observers believe, in fact, that the long guerrilla phase of the civil war has already begun, with the army holding most of the towns and the rebels controlling much of the countryside. Despite the apparent determination of the Pakistan Government to maintain its hold on East Bengal, the sheer human arithmetic of the situation seemed to indicate that the Bengalis would ultimately win freedom or at least some form of regional autonomy. At the present time, the East Bengalis outnumber the West Pakistani soldiers in their midst by about 1,000 to 1.

NEWS WEEK April 26, 1971

PAKISTAN: VULTURES AND WILD DOGS

For more than two weeks, the Pakistani Army of President Mohammad Yahya Khan had played a curious waiting game. Sitting tight in their well-fortified cantonments in the rebellious eastern wing of their divided country, the federal troops virtually ignored the taunts of the seces-

sionist "liberation forces." But then early last week, the lull came to a sudden end. Springing from their strong-holds the Punjabi regulars simultaneously staged more than a dozen devastating attacks from one end of beleaguered East Pakistan to the other. And when the blitzkrieg was over, it was clear that the less-than-one-month-old Republic of Bangla Desh (Bengal Nation) had been delivered a stunning blow.

In a civil war already marked by brutality, the lightning attacks were notable for their savagery. In the port city of Chittagong, Pakistani troops reportedly forced Bengali prisoners to ride on the front of a truck, shouting "Victory for Bengal"—an independence slogan. When other Bengalis emerged from their hiding places, the Pakistanis opened fire with machine guns. And in the cities of Sylhet and Comilla along the eastern borders West Pakistani firepower routed the followers of nationalist leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and left the bodies of scores of dead peasants to be picked apart by vultures and wild dogs.

All in all, the bitter campaign seemed to suggest that the West Pakistanis had more than purely military objectives in mind. In city after city, in fact, the soldiers were apparently determined to shatter the economic base of East Pakistan in order to crush the independence movement. On orders from the Islamabad high command, troops systematically gunned down students, engineers, doctors and any other persons with a potential for leadership, whether they were nationalists or not. "They want to push us back to the eighteenth century," said one Bengali soldier, "so that there will be famine and we will be reduced to eating grass. They want to make sure that no head will ever be raised against them again."

Despite the devastating offensive, the Bengalis showed little inclination to throw in the towel. A group of Mujib's Awami League colleagues announced the formation of a Bangla Desh war Cabinet, promising "freedom as long as there is sun over Bengal." Beyond the rhetoric, the rebels were hoping that the approaching monsoon season would sever the West Pakistanis already strained logistical lifeline. "The supply lines are Yahya Khan's Achilles' heel", said one pro-Bengali analyst. "By our calculations, the Pakistani Army is facing the monsoons without a supply margin. The commanders cannot be happy."

Locked Up

Happy or not, the West Pakistani leaders had, most observers said good reason for confidence. The Westerners claimed to have Mujib locked up and awaiting trial on charges of treason. And with the dynamic, 51 year old symbol of the rebel movement seemingly out of the way the new government appeared to be more shadow than substance. In the field, the Bengalis have suffered staggering casualties, losing as many as 25,000 men.

More important, the fighting disposition of the Bengalis was increasingly open to question. "I met a steady stream of refugees carrying their belongings in big bundles on their heads and driving small flocks of scrawny goats or cattle," cabled Newsweek's Milan J. Kubic after a trip into East Pakistan last week. "But I saw only one Toyota jeep of the 'Mukti Fouj,' Bengal's liberation army. Its un-armed driver a young Bengali from Jhingergacha, had an idea that the enemy was just up the road, but neither he nor the two other soldiers with him seemed anxious to seek battle. 'What would we fight with ?" He asked with a grin. "We haven't got anything,".

Neighbours

That let-someone-else-do-it attitude, combined with the absence of effective central leadership did not augur well for Bangla Desh. But one big question mark remained : the reaction of the neighbouring big powers— China and India. Almost from the beginning of the conflict, the West Pakistanis have charged that arch-rival India was an active participant on the side of East Pakistan. And last week Islamabad officials claimed to have wiped out two companies of Indian border security forces allegedly operating within the eastern province.

For its part, New Delhi stoutly denied any direct involvement. And most observers on the scene supported that contention. Moreover, it seemed certain that President Yahya Khan was trumpeting the charges at least in part to unite his own people—many of whom had gotten queasy about the reports of full scale slaughters in the east. But it was equally

apparent that New Delhi had indeed gone out of its way to make friendly noises toward the rebel Bengalis—and to take a slap at Islamabad. Throughout the week, Indian newspapers gleefully carried accounts of purported Pakistani atrocities. And the Indian Cabinet met in a well-publicized but closed session to discuss recognition of Bangla Desh.

Chou's Cable

In response, Peking seemed more than willing to weigh in with a tough statement in support of the West Pakistanis. In the most specific declaration since the fighting broke out late last month, Premier Chou En-lai sent a cable to Yahya blasting "Indian expansionists" and adding that the Chinese would firmly back the Pakistanis "in their just struggle to safeguard their state sovereignty and national independence." On top of that, there were rumours throughout Asia last week that the West Pakistani only instituted the military crackdown after extensive consultations with Peking.

Yet for all the ominous signs of a brewing confrontation on the subcontinent, most analysts doubted that the rhetoric would escalate to action, at least not in the near future. For one thing, China's support for Islamabad—Peking's ally in its long-haul competition with India—seemed to have been something of a pro-forma necessity. For another, the Indians are currently more than pre-occupied with their own domestic problems. Still, the volatile brinkmanship of Yahya Khan and the highly emotional Indian response carried with them the threat of a major explosion. "If the fighting and the bloodshed simmer on," said one observer, "then there's always the possibility that any tiny spark may send the entire region up in flames—eventually engulfing all of Pakistan, India and may be even China as well".

TIME Magazine May 10, 1971

PAKISTAN

HUMILIATION OR WAR

While East Pakistan continue to suffer from the bloody civil war and the growing threat of food shortages, the other half of the divided country is bearing burdens of another sort. The army backed federal Government of President Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan remains totally committed to keeping the Eastern wing from breaking away to establish Bangla Desh, as independent Bangla State. But the strain of the undertaking is overtaxing West Pakistan's resources and nerves. "This regime has stuck East Pakistan in its throats"; says one American diplomat in the federal capital of Islamabad, "The army must either swallow it or cough it up."

By last week open fighting had almost completely ceased in East Pakistan. Nonetheless, West Pakistan must continue for the foreseeable future to lay out huge sums to support an army of occupation in East Pakistan. Moreover, the army is raising two additional divisions to bolster its defences against India.

Ancient Hatred

Meanwhile, West Pakistani industry is operating at only one-third of capacity because of the loss of sales to the markets in the more populous Eastern half of the country—and because of a general economic slump. West Pakistan is hurt in other ways, too, by East Pakistan's economic collapse. In normal times East Pakistan's jute industry earns nearly half the whole country's foreign exchange, now it lies idle, and the rest of the East's meagre industry and transportation facilities sustained almost complete disruption. West Pakistan will need to find funds to help the Eastern half get started again. That will be difficult. "We are on the brink of economic

destruction", declared an editorial in West Pakistan's NEW TIMES last week. The country has just about exhausted its foreign currency reserves and is unable to meet the debt repayments due to U.S. and European creditors in May and June. Foreign aid including a £ 80 million loan from the U.S., has stopped, and the eleven-nation consortium that supports most of Pakistan's economic development is reluctant to bail out Yahya's regime until the present crisis is ended.

Under the stress of trying to hang on to East Bengal, the West Pakistanis old oppressive hatred of the Indian has flared up again. The federal Government has completely sealed off West Pakistan from outside reports about the repressive army crackdown in East Pakistan. The West Pakistanis tend to view the conflict as a sinister Indian plot to dismember their country. India has remained nominally neutral, but it has, in fact, given Bengali rebels a haven.

Border Shooting

One result is a series of diplomatic snubs and threats between Pakistan and India. After Pakistan's chief diplomat in Calcutta defected to the Bangla Desh side, Islamabad sent a successor who was unable to make his way to the mission through Indian demonstrators. Pakistan, thereupon, closed the office and demanded that India shut down its mission in Dacca.

Potentially more dangerous than the diplomatic scuffling, however, was the situation developing along the borders between East Pakistan and India. West Pakistan troops have been pushing to close the boundaries between the insurgents and possible sources of supply in India. Last week both sides traded charges that their troops had fired upon the other's territory. The tense atmosphere evoked fears among foreign diplomats that another Indo-Pakistan war might break out. Neither country wants to fight, or indeed can afford to; but this was no less true in the period preceding the 17 day war of 1965. "The army's choice might be humiliation in East Pakistan or war with India," says one diplomat. It's possible that a chain of events in East Pakistan could lead to open hostilities.

TIME Magazine May 24, 1971

PAKISTAN

POLISHING A TARNISHED IMAGE

"We have been maligned," declared the Pakistani armed forces intelligence chief, Major-General Mohammad Akbar Khan. The General's complaint, delivered to half a dozen foreign journalists in Karachi, concerned the widespread reports of army brutality in the effort to crush the seven week old Bengali rebellion in East Pakistan. Incensed by what it describes as "concocted items put out by foreign press and radio," the government staged a series of briefings and a fast four-day helicopter tour of the East to get the "correct" story across.

Peace Committee

The West Pakistan government has good reason to fret about its image. Since the crackdown on the breakaway state of Bangla Desh began late in March, at least 2,00,000 have died—almost all of them Bengalis. In addition, more than 1,500,000 Bengalis have fled to India, and those who have stayed behind are threatened with an approaching famine that the government does not seem anxious to combat. Most outside observers have laid the responsibility for the East Pakistan tragedy to the hobnail-tough martial law imposed by Lieut.-General Tikka (meaning "red hot") Khan. The West Pakistani dominated government insists that the army has saved the country, not destroyed it. Bengali rebels acting "in high conspiracy with India, were tearing through East Pakistan with tactics reminiscent of Nazi storm troopers", and the army was forced to step in to prevent a blood-bath.

The journalists' tour was carefully staged to make the government's improbable tale at least look convincing. Army escorts for the six newsmen spared no effort to clean up, screen off or simply avoid shell-pocked buildings, burnt-out

Bengali settlements left by Tikka Khan's jets and tanks. On the other hand, the Pakistanis lost no opportunity to show off evidence of brutality by the Bengalis. At Natore, a town north-west of Dacca, the reporters were greeted by a "peace committee", as the army-organised pacification teams are known. The committee led the way to a nearby village where, they said, 700 of the 1,300 residents had been slaughtered by rampaging Bengalis. The feature attraction was a well that was choked with human skeletons and reeked of decomposing flesh. Said one peace committee-man "You have never seen such atrocities."

The army was not at all eager, however, to let the journalists look around on their own. While walking through Natore, TIME correspondent Louis Kraar reported last week, "a bearded peace committee-man kept interrupting every time anyone spoke to me. Finally, I escaped him—and found myself in the Hindu Section of the town. It was totally destroyed, a pile of rubble and ashes. As I walked, a young Bengali pressed close and explained that he was a student. 'We are living in terror of the army', he told me. 'Until today, when you came, they have been killing people".

Perfect Order

Just about everywhere, Kraar found, the killing had followed a typical pattern: government troops would try to "liberate" a rebel-held town in a deliberately provoking manner. The Bengali townspeople would wreak revenge on the Non-Bengalis in the process killing perhaps 20,000 or about 10% of the total dead, and then the army would pounce with everything it had. At Mymensingh, a town north of Dacca, that meant an air strike by Pakistani jets and a five-hour shelling by two American-made M-34 tanks. Many of Mymensingh's Bengali sectors are in ruins, and about 90% of its pre-civil war population has fled or been killed. That is evidently the kind of record that pleases Tikka Khan, who likes to say: "We want perfect law and order".

THE WEEKLY ECONOMIST May 29, 1971

HOW NOT TO FACE FACTS

President Yahya needs to acknowledge realities, Mrs. Gandhi needs to maintain her cool, and the rest of us should be more helpful.

It is a standard practice of governments, especially those which are fighting wars, to put out self-justifying propaganda. This propaganda may fail to convince, which is troublesome. Or it may convince so well that the propagandists themselves are taken in, which is positively dangerous. The Government of Pakistan has clearly dug itself a credibility gap. The question now is whether it has also buried its head in the sand.

President Yahya Khan's press conference on Monday, his first public appearance since he ordered his army to take over East Pakistan two months ago, did not resolve the issue either way. The President showed some statesmanship when he refused to rise to Mrs. Gandhi's hints earlier in the day that the Indians might be forced to intervene militarily in East Bengal. He showed some realism when he admitted that the state of Pakistan's economy "is so bad that I cannot tell you". And he showed some flexibility when he modified the total ban on the Awami League and agreed to accept back a number of refugees. But he went on to load his offers with conditions and to repeat some of his spokesmen's familiar nonsense.

It is logically consistent, if nothing else, that a government which has not acknowledged that it is fighting a civil war should not recognise refugees from that war. Accordingly Pakistan radio refers to "an imaginary influx" and labels the refugees "Hindu fifth columnists" and "Indian infiltrators". Not until last week did the government finally concede that the fleeing millions might include any innocent victims at all. President Yahya seemed to be opening the way to a solution last Friday when he declared that "bonafide Pakistani citizens who left their homes due to disturb conditions" would be welcomed back to East Pakistan. But who are bonafide citizens? On Sunday Pakistan Radio insisted that these are

only a tiny fraction of the refugees, while the vast majority are "miscreants" and Indians. And on Monday the President himself vowed not to "open the floodgates for Indian destitutes."

The most charitable explanation for this kind of language is that the Pakistanis have got themselves hooked on a fable of Indian inequity which they cannot abandon without intolerable loss of face. But they also appear to be using this propaganda line to justify a policy which will prevent significant numbers of East Bengalis from ever returning home. One group of refugees that is likely to be excluded altogether under this selective approach are the East Bengali Hindus. The migration of the Hindus is a classic case of how propaganda can become self-fulfilling. Just after the March action, West Pakistani newspapers began accusing the Hindus in East Bengal of having illicit links with the Indians. The army then made the Hindus a special target for revenge, forcing them to flee to India in disproportionate numbers. This is now taken as proof that the Hindus were Indian saboteurs all along.

The prospect that great numbers of refugees will become permanent residents of India—either by their own choice or as a result of Pakistani exclusion—is the most terrifying aspect of the current crisis for the Indian government. On Monday Mrs. Gandhi appealed to the rest of the world and particularly to the great powers to take necessary measures by putting pressure on Pakistan.

In fact the Indians have good cause for decrying "the unconsciously long time which the world is taking to react to this stark tragedy." Two months have passed by, since the killing began in East Pakistan, foreign governments have uttered scarcely a cautionary word to the Pakistanis and have contributed nothing very impressive to the maintenance of the 335 refugee camps in India. The Indians estimate that just keeping the current total of refugees alive for six months (disregarding the 60,000 more who are streaming in every day) may cost over £ 100 million.

Clearly the Indians cannot be expected to bear this financial burden on top of the all but intolerable political strain which the refugee influx has imposed. Tensions are rising every day in parliament; in the border states and along

the frontier where Indian and Pakistani troops had several shoot-outs this week. Foreign relief funds—in huge quantities—would relieve certain pressure. But the danger of conflict will continue to mount so long as the refugees keep streaming over the border. And the only government that can break this vicious cycle is Pakistan's.

President Yahya raised a glimmer of hope for such a breakthrough on Monday when he promised to produce a plan for return to civilian government within two to three weeks. But his more important promise that day was to relax the blanket ban on political activity by members of the Awami League. Like his offer to the refugees, the value of this selective amnesty will depend on how widely he defines the "genuinely misled" as opposed to those who must be punished for their crimes. Sheikh Mujib, the imprisoned Awami leader, clearly belongs to the second category, for the President repeated the story about a Mujib secessionist plot. But unless the President actively welcome back Mujib's lieutenants, including, at least some of those who sought refuge in India, he will find that no plan for civilian rule in the east, or indeed at centre, can get off the ground.

HERALD TRIBUNE June 1, 1971
INDIA AND PAKISTAN

Millions of refugees—Muslims and others—have flooded India escaping from what France-Soir (14 May) described as "Abattoirs humains au Pakistan." The Pakistan Ambassador in his letter to you today (May 26) says that it is India's fault. We have many faults but we are not responsible for the ruthless repression in East Pakistan. The Guardian of London stated on the 31st March: "Henceforth the country (Pakistan) must be regarded as a particularly brutal and insensitive military dictatorship...."In Newsweek of 26th April, we read: "On orders from the Islamabad High Command, troops systematically gunned down students, engineers, doctors, and any other persons with a potential for leadership..."

What is the genesis of this genocide? Because Mujibur Rahman, with a massive popular mandate (167 out of 169 East Pakistan seats in the 300-member National Assembly, and 288 out of 300 seats in the East Pakistan Assembly) wanted to implement the six-point program of provincial autonomy—known since 1966—on which he fought the recent elections. According to Keesing's Contemporary Archives, the majority of the population (54 per cent) of Pakistan—about 73 million (of which about 9.5 million are non-Muslims) live in East Pakistan. Mujibur Rahman did not demand secession. The majority do not usually "secede" from the minority.

The Pakistan Ambassador says: "The insinuation that East Pakistan has been treated as a colony is gross nonsense." Is it? The average (per capita) income in West Pakistan was 32 per cent higher than in East Pakistan in 1950-60. In 1969-70, the disparity climbed to 61 per cent. East Pakistan's balance-of-payments surplus has been consistently used to finance West Pakistan's deficit on foreign accounts, and has led to a net transfer of resources from the East to West Pakistan estimated by an official report at $2.6 billion during the last two decades. Can a colony be more methodically exploited?

The Pakistan Ambassador refers to the readiness of Pakistan to take back "the genuine refugees." This is an intriguing idea: How to detect the non-genuine refugees among the millions of them and more than 60,000 a day still coming? I see in today's London Times (May 26): "Pakistan offer to refugees seen as cruel joke."

The Pakistan Ambassador says: "What Pakistan requires is leadership, not agitators who produce chaos." For the last 16 years Pakistan has been ruled by strong leaders—General Iskander Mirza, General Ayub Khan, and now General Yahya Khan. Why then the present chaos?

D.N. CHATTERJEE,
Ambassador of India

Paris.

THE TIMES, Friday June, 4, 1971

Background to the failure of the negotiations between Sheikh Mujib and the leader of West Pakistan.

SECRET CATALOGUE OF GUILT AND DISASTER OVER EAST PAKISTAN

Within the space of a few short weeks both East and West Bengal have suddenly become international trouble spots. Millions of people have been uprooted by civil war, thousands have been killed, famine and disease are already beginning to stalk the countryside and a full scale war between India and Pakistan threatens to break out at any moment.

But even more disturbing is the fact that the situation can only deteriorate. World leaders are, of course, talking glibly about the hope that East Bengalis and the West Pakistanis will come to a "political settlement". But even the most naive student of Pakistani affairs knows that a political settlement is out of the question now.

In the coming months the legal aspects behind this man made holocaust will be hotly debated in the capitals of the world and on international platforms. But many of the issues which precipitated this convulsion have been clouded by the cries of "secession" or "genocide" and other accusations and counter accusations and if an accusing finger is to be pointed at any single Pakistani leader then one must, at this juncture, take a judicious look at the chronological sequence of events leading up to the rift.

It is worthwhile picking up the threads in January, 1970 when President Yahya Khan, who had promised to hand over power to a popular government, lifted the ban on political activity in both East and West Pakistan as the prelude to election of constituent assembly. To hasten the constitution making process and to assuage the fears of West Pakistanis

who believed that integrity of Pakistan might be jeopardized by imagined East Bengali separatists the President had earlier issued a legal framework order (LFO) which gave him the right to ratify or reject the constitution.

It was already obvious that the former Foreign Minister, Mr Bhutto, would emerge as the most popular leader in West Pakistan and the fiery East Bengali leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had already demonstrated his strength on the streets of East Pakistan.

Political activity began in earnest the moment the ban was lifted and as both of the leaders began to barnstorm their respective provinces Pakistanis began, for the first time, to look forward to their first taste of democracy.

But as the two leaders launched their campaigns it soon became clear that they were fighting the elections on rigid and diametrically opposed grounds and that there would be hardly any common meeting ground in the assembly. Mr. Bhutto, whose whole political base is essentially founded in the militant Punjabis' obsession over the Kashmir dispute, began stomping up and down the western province talking of a thousand-year war with India. And to maintain this attitude he assured his voters that he stood for a strong central government, a strong army and a new offensive to liberate Kashmir.

As millions of Pakistanis went to the polls in the country's first free elections last year General Yahya Khan and his aides waited for the results with bated breath. President Yahya certainly intended to hand over power but he had hoped that the results would force East and West Pakistani leaders into an alliance which would preserve the integrity of the country. But the generals had not counted on two factors. At the last moment the Awami League's major political opponent, the left wing National Awami Party, decided to boycott the elections leaving the field open to the Awami League. At the same time the West Pakistani administration's alleged failure to come to the timely assistance of cyclone victims was used to conjure up more votes for the Awami League and in terms of preserving the integrity of the country the results were disastrous.

Almost every Bengali endorsed the Sheikh's six-point programme which turned the election in to a referendum.

Bengali Guerrillas load ammunition truck.
Newsweek : 19-7-71.

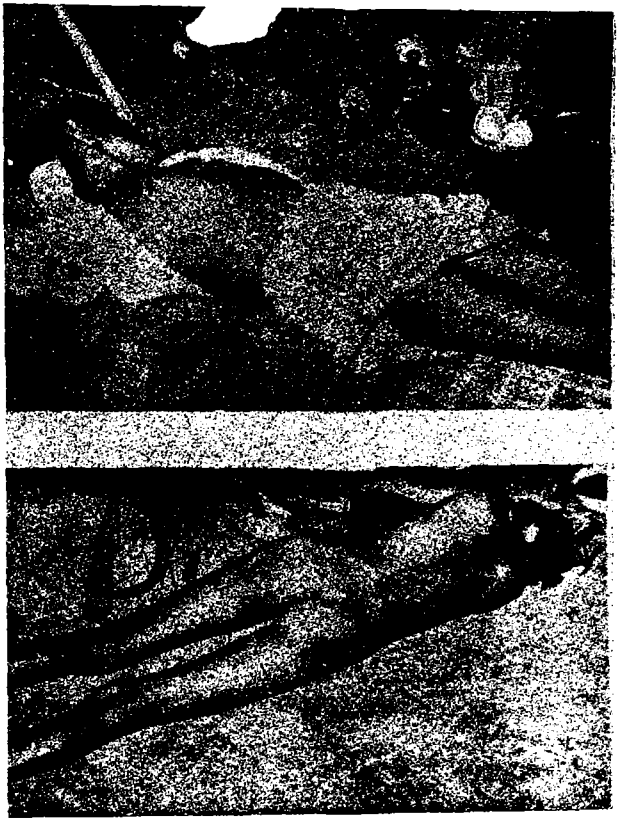




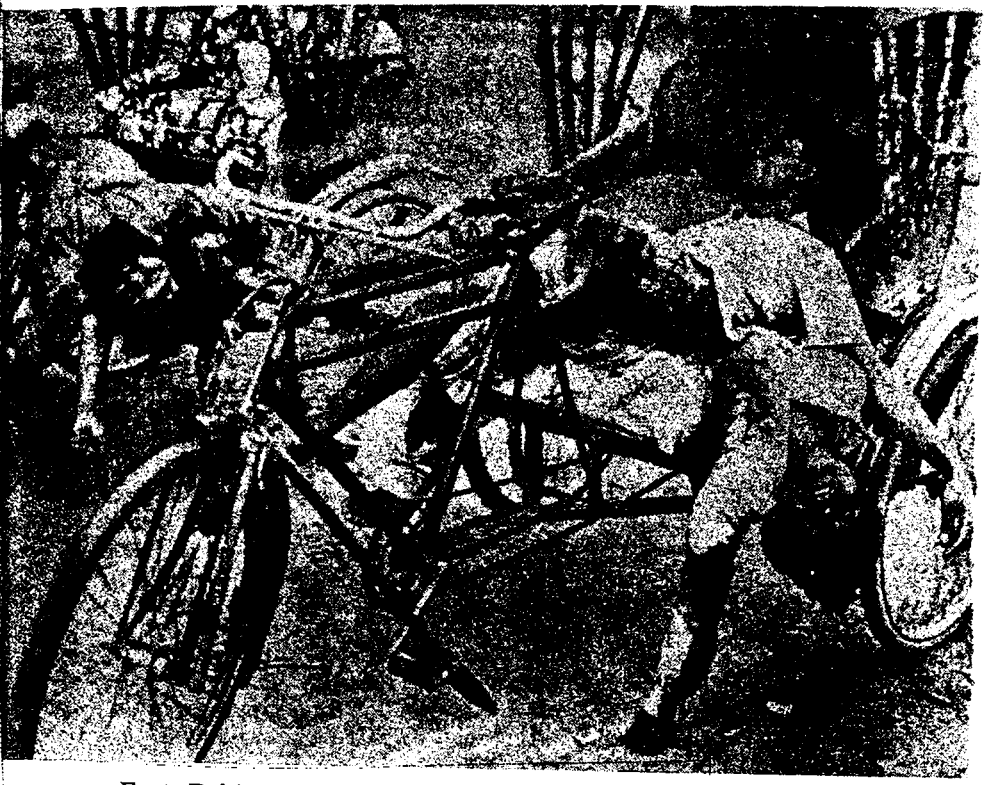
Freedom Fighter undergoing training in a secret camp.
Photo : Swapan.



Demolished Nayar Bazar in Dacca.
Courtesy : Amiya Tarafdar.



Mother and daughter—both raped and killed by Pakistani soldiers.
From a Booklet published in Mujib Nagar.

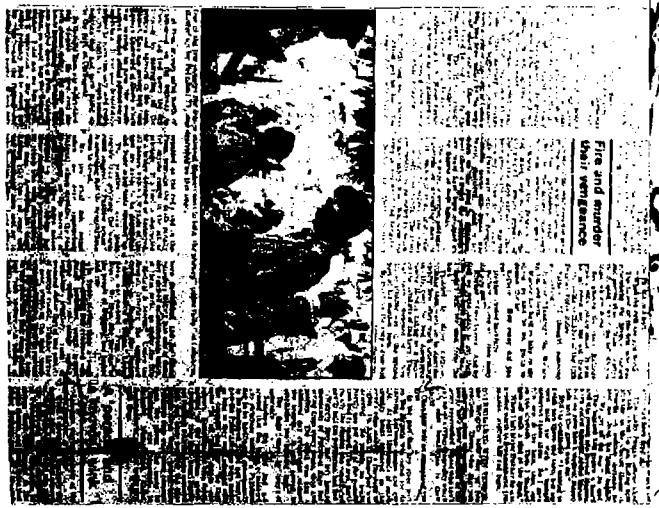


East Pakistan bombing victims in pedicabs.
Time : 26-4-71



Bengali rebels displaying severed head of a federal soldier.
Newsweek : 5-4-71.

Sunday Times : 13-6-71.





The baby's parents were killed in East Pakistan. Other refugees helped her safely across the Indian border. She is now dead.
Daily Times : 3-6-71.

The Awami League swept the polls and claimed 167 of the 169 Bengali seats and with the support of the anti-Punjabi regional parties in the western province, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was confident of obtaining the support of more than two-thirds of the 313 members of the Constituent Assembly. In West Pakistan Mr. Bhutto and his People's Party won 82 of the 138 seats allocated to the western wing. The Punjab recoiled in horror for it became blatantly obvious that the Bengalis would be able to draw up their own constitution the moment the assembly met.

But Mr. Bhutto, who knew that he could never become the Prime Minister of an undivided Pakistan was thinking of the future within hours of the election. He suddenly discovered that he had a vested interest in the President's legal framework order. The clause which gave the President the right to veto or reject the Constituent Assembly's document had become the Punjab's veto.

On the night after the elections the flamboyant lawyer revealed part of his plan to me: "What do you think I will do. The Sheikh will push his constitution through with his brute majority and the responsibility will lie on the President's shoulders. I doubt whether he will sign a document which is unacceptable to West Pakistan."

In other words Mr. Bhutto had a vested interest in keeping the LFO in force but he had told me that he had heard disconcerting reports that the Sheikh was planning to declare that the Constituent Assembly was sovereign body the moment it met. In other words the LFO and the Punjabi's veto would disappear.

In the meantime the Bengalis were in a festive mood and there had been no moves towards secession. On December 24 President Yahya had described Mujibur Rahman as "our future prime minister" and had agreed that the constituent assembly would sit in Dacca. The Bengalis began to decorate the city and assembly house and the mood in Dacca had relaxed. The slogan Bangla Desh had not been raised and no one was talking of independence.

But Mr. Bhutto had ideas. At first he tried to oppose the early sitting of the Assembly but on February 13 President Yahya announced that Assembly would meet on March 3.

The actual point of no return which precipitated the present crisis came two days later on February 15. Mr. Bhutto announced that his party would boycott the Constituent. Assembly and at the same time he threatened any other West Pakistani politicians who were planning to travel to Dacca. In short Mr. Bhutto began to pile up pressure on President Yahya.

At the same time Mr. Bhutto had met several of President Yahya's generals who were considered hawks on the subject of East Bengal. They included the present governor of East Pakistan, General Tikka Khan.

In the meantime several West Pakistanis had defied Mr. Bhutto's threat and had travelled to Dacca in the last week of February to participate in the framing of a constitution. In terms of arithmetic the representatives of two thirds of the country had congregated in Dacca.

But on February 28 Mr. Bhutto flew to Rawalpindi to remind President Yahya of the consequences he would have to face if he ratified a constitution which was unacceptable to the Punjab and subsequently to a Punjabi army.

The President made his first mistake. He succumbed to Punjabi pressures and without consulting Sheikh Mujib, as the leader of the largest party, he postponed the Constituent Assembly on March 1.

The Bengalis who saw the move as a conspiracy went wild and the Army was called out to quell disturbances in Dacca. The Bengalis had lost their faith in the President and the first cries of Bangla Desh were heard on the streets of Dacca. Hawks in the Awami League began to call for independence and the Sheikh promised to make a dramatic announcement at a mass rally on March 7. On March 6 the President attempted to retrieve the position and announced that the Assembly would meet on March 25. But things had gone too far. On the next day the Sheikh, staving off militant cries for independence, announced four preconditions for future talks. The most important was the withdrawal of martial law itself (this would eliminate Mr. Bhutto's veto in the form of the LFO).

But one thing was clear at this juncture: the Sheikh, facing tremendous pressure, was still prepared to participate in the union of Pakistan.

He would certainly not compromise the Kashmir issue by resuming trade ties with India (as the Bengalis advocated) and he opposed all of Bengal's demands for autonomy which would strip the central government of all effective power. The Punjab sighed with relief. The Bengalis had been allocated an inbuilt majority in the Constituent Assembly the virtue of their large population but every Punjabi believed they had found a leader who could stand up to the Sheikh.

But across India in the impoverished eastern wing the fiery Bengali leader and his Awami League lieutenants were adamant that they would not concede one inch of their six-point programme for autonomy. The Sheikh had made it plain that when he talked of autonomy he did not mean secession. "I want constitutional guarantees which will end this economic exploitation for ever. We have the larger population so how can a majority secede from a minority", he told me at the time.

To give weight to his demand for the immediate withdrawal of martial law the Sheikh launched a massive civil disobedience movement. Life in the entire province was disrupted and as the cries of Bangla Desh became louder the President flew to Dacca on March 16 with two alternative offers. (1) He said he was willing to restore power to the elected representatives of the people immediately if the Sheikh was willing to form provisional national government at both centre and at provincial level or (2) He would restore power to provinces and an interim government led by the President himself would administer the day-to-day needs of the country until a constitution was framed.

At the time the two leaders said there was room for optimism. But in the meantime Mr. Bhutto had heard of the proposals and had publicly declared that West Pakistan would go up in smoke if the People's Party was not included in the proposed coalition Government. To prove his point he launched a massive and violent campaign in the Punjab and flew to Dacca on March 21 to join the talks with other West Pakistani leaders.

When President Yahya asked the Sheikh whether he was prepared to take Bhutto, the leader of the largest West Pakistani party, into a central coalition government, the Sheikh cited democratic precedents and said that as the

leader of the single largest party he must be allowed to select his own partners. Again his willingness to participate in the central affairs of Pakistan does not suggest that the Sheikh was planning secession.

But the President succumbed to Mr. Bhutto's strident threats again and the proposal for a national government was dropped.

As time began to run out the Sheikh and Yahya Khan agreed to the second compromise formula: immediate restoration of power at provincial level. The Sheikh asked the President to issue an immediate proclamation withdrawing martial law and restoring power to East Pakistan and the four province of West Pakistan. The Sheikh agreed to the suggestion that the President could continue to administer an interim central government until a constitution was framed.

But in the meantime Pakistan's future was being decided by other forces. Mr. Bhutto had met the hawks in the army, and mass movement on the streets of Bengal had slipped out of Mujib's control.

As the soldiers slipped into battle dress in the barracks angry and frustrated Bengalis began to raise the flag of Bangla Desh in Dacca. It was Bhutto who finally brought the President to take the decision which set East Bengal on fire. When the President put the Sheikh's proposal to the West Pakistan leader Mr. Bhutto pointed out that if martial law was withdrawn Pakistan would be broken up into five sovereign states the moment the President restored power to the provinces. He expressed the fear that Mujibur Rahman was trying to liquidate the central government. Because the President withdrew martial law he had no sanction to carry on as the head of state.

Half convinced the President went back to Mujibur Rahman and expressed these fears. He promised Mujib that he would withdraw martial law the moment the National Assembly met and gave a central government some form of validity. Sheikh Mujib reiterated his demand for the immediate withdrawal of martial law and President Yahya, now fully convinced that he was dealing with a traitor, turned to his generals.

Taking events to their logical conclusion there is no doubt that the present holocaust was precipitated by President Yahya Khan when he postponed the Assembly without consulting the Bengalis, but even more so by Mr. Bhutto's deliberate decision to boycott the Assembly on March 3.

By : PETER HAZELHURST

NEW YORK TIMES, June, 1971

GALBRAITH : HELPING THE PAKISTANIS

By John Kenneth Galbraith

[*John Kenneth Galbraith, who served a tour of duty as U.S. ambassador to India, wrote this article for The New York Times.*]

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.—I have been reluctant in these last months to speak of the political problems of East Bengal. All of us who have served in India are thought to be partisans of that country as doubtless on occasions we have been.

Like others I have wondered if political discussion might divert attention from the terribly urgent problem of helping to provide sustenance for the refugees. But such is the component of disaster in our present policy that I feel compelled to stress a few of the fundamentals in this ghastly situation.

In any considerations of the Bengal tragedy, four factors are controlling. I list them :

The immediate aspects of the refugee problem are urgent and grave and every effort at alleviation must be made. But there can be no tolerable solution which does not allow these people to return to their home villages and land. That this vast number of people—approaching in total the number displaced by World War II—should remain indefinitely in camps or in the crowded adjacent provinces of India is so cruel as to be unthinkable.

The refugees will return only to a peaceful and secure country. Both the overwhelming vote for autonomy earlier

this year and the events since make it certain that East Pakistan cum East Bengal will only be peaceful if full autonomy and self-government are accorded to it. Continued administration from Islamabad will be under conditions of open or suppressed revolt and the refugees will not return.

Autonomy and self-government are also wanted as the vote showed by the people who have not fled and, a most important point, autonomy and self-government of East Pakistan are essential for West Pakistan as well. By itself West Pakistan is a highly viable community with a higher potential for economic growth than India. As military rulers of the more numerous Bengalis and with the associated expenditure it will be ruined. What is worse, the armed forces of West Pakistan and the Punjabis, Pathans and the other communities that comprise them will continue to be featured in the world press as cruel and oppressive men. They are anything but that, but this is the reputation that any pacifying army, not excluding our own in Vietnam, invariably acquires.

A military solution by India would further embitter relations between the two nations of the subcontinent. And it would be greatly disenchanting to all who, as friends of India, cherish the Gandhian dislike of such measures.

The conclusion for American policy follows:

It is to hope that the two great Islamic communities of the subcontinent can still find some relationship such as that between two parts of a commonwealth which will allow them to live in independent companionship. But there must be full autonomy and self-government for East Bengal. Accordingly no action of ours should encourage or seem to encourage military domination of the East by the West.

No Arms For West

This means no military assistance of any kind to West Pakistan.. And it means that even small or symbolic assistance which seems to suggest support can be as damaging as substantial help. The foregoing factors also forbid any economic assistance so long as it could serve either directly or indirectly to pay for suppression of Bengali autonomy or independence.

And no arcane strategy involving the Chinese can be a justification for a different policy. These considerations of course mean a continuation of an embargo on arms for India and a clearly expressed disapproval of any possible Indian military initiative.

With all else, we must be completely generous in helping alleviate the suffering of the refugees.

One of the clear lessons of these last years is that our power in the third world is limited. It is not within our competence to "solve" the problem of East Bengal. But it is within our competence to be compassionate, to urge (as evidently have the Soviets) against the use of force, and above all to stop doing the wrong thing.

THE SUNDAY TIMES MAGAZINE, June 6, 1971.
THE ROAD FROM BANGLA DESH

These are the world's newest refugees, nearly two million of them, who fled the few miles into India after civil war broke out in East Pakistan last March. This group found a home in a railway station in West Bengal. They are lucky ; they left their own country because they feared reprisals by the West Pakistan army. But now, also, they will not starve. India and the relief organisations have so far been able to provide enough food and medical supplies. Those who stayed behind were not so fortunate.

The life of the refugee produces its own particular kind of hopelessness. Isolated in a foreign country, physically weak, surrounded by strangers, these Bengalis swiftly find themselves victims of increasing lethargy, silently awaiting any new blow from an almost universally hostile world. The old men, who in their own country had great dignity, are now reduced to queuing like children for food. If they are ill, like the half-crippled man with his stick and umbrella, they merely sit and wait for someone to help them. No one does. If they are young, or part of a united family, they can at least scavenge for food and fuel to recreate a vagabond imitation of their former life in Pakistan.

Homeless, Stateless, Destitute—But Alive.

The refugee settlements stretch all along the border between India and East Pakistan. Some live in odd vacant buildings, some have been given tents by the Indians, some live in primitive grass huts and queue for their food in the open air. At Hasanabad station, some 65 miles from Calcutta, there is room for a hundred ; 8000 are camped around the platforms. The politicians talk grandly of a future independent state of Bangla Desh. These people have become refugees, they say, because of their belief in a new Bengali nation. But many have fled because they are Hindus, and know that whenever a Moslem army is on the rampage they are slaughtered, whatever their politics. And some are there merely because they are frightened. They don't know what happened. They only know they are glad to be alive.

An Unfortunate Past, A Terrible Present And A Tragic Future.

In the week that Donald McCullin sent back the pictures of Pakistani refugees there were many well-published appeals for our sympathy. A Trafalgar Square gathering vowed to dramatise world poverty. Half-a-dozen Welshmen screamed swearwords in a Swansea courtroom to protest the suppression of their language. A crowd of several hundred Jews attacked the Soviet Embassy and harangued the editor of The Time, because other Jews were suffering in Russia. Almost every other poster seemed to show a dead man, a starving child, or imprisoned intellectual.

It is difficult, in this clamour, to explain why one set of victims deserved more attention, and more help, than any others.

It is even awkward to present the pitiful spectacle of refugees, and expend a consistent and useful compassion in return. There have been so many refugees in recent years. After a while each problem seems to disappear, or at least not to be so interesting.

The refugees from East Pakistan, or from Bangla Desh, if you prefer will not disappear. Nor will their problem be solved until world public opinion or some inconceivable

change of heart by the West Pakistan Government, transforms the situation in their country.

Already their suffering are far worse than when these photographs were taken. But this time the monsoon rains will be falling heavily. Tents and grass huts are no protection at all against such violent rain; and very few of these refugees have even these temporary shelters to keep them dry and alive.

The Indian authorities have done enough to prevent immediate epidemics. They, and the international relief organisations, are providing food. Three weeks ago, however, the Indian Government said it would cost too much to feed the two million refugees. As far as they are concerned, the only solution is for the refugees to return where they came from.

If things were not so terrible one might say these people were lucky to have escaped from East Pakistan, which, by any analysis, is the most unfortunate country in the world. Its climate is penitential, its physical conditions appalling. The standard of living is so low that it is impossible to gather reliable statistics about it. Because the Moslem religion rejects birth control even more implacably than the Roman Catholics, the population grows swiftly. There are 75 million people in East Pakistan. It is more crowded than anywhere else on earth.

The cyclone of last year killed two million people. It did nothing to ease the problem of over-population, because both agriculture and industry were disrupted.

Last December the East Pakistanis enjoyed what seemed, at the time, to be their first good fortune for decades. In the Pakistani elections their party, the Awami League, gained a majority in the entire country. By rights their leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was Prime Minister of Pakistan.

However, such a result was so unwelcome both to the West Pakistanis and to the army regime in Islamabad that nothing happened. For three months Sheikh Mujib and Yahya Khan, Pakistan's President, argued in Dacca. As the argument broke down this March, Yahya's army moved in.

The army attack was designed to crush all resistance in East Pakistan. The soldiers therefore killed indiscriminately. Had their massacre succeeded it might have been justified.

All it did, however, was to unite East Pakistan against the army, and begin two months of terrible killing.

Yahya's Government has described the fighting as, first, a deliberate plot by Indian spies and traitors and, second, a Bengali revolt. Both these explanations are lies and even they are scarcely relevant.

The real reason for the attack was to re-unite Pakistan by destroying all Bengali ambitions of an independent state. It has, however, created such ambitions. For years East Pakistan will suffer bloody guerrilla warfare. An independent Bangla Desh is inevitable. What no one can predict, or even plan satisfactorily, is how such an independent state can be created.

The refugees from Bangla Desh, therefore, have escaped from the most unfortunate past. They suffer the most terrible present, with tragic future ahead. Nowhere else have people, however dreadful their problems, so much to endure. This is why they deserve more attention, and more help, than anyone else in the world.

GENESIS OF HOLOCAUST

By: **JUSTICE ABU SAYEED CHOWDHURY**

[*From the tape-recorded version of an extempore speech given at London Headquarters of the Royal Commonwealth Society on 8th June, 1971 before a distinguished gathering. It may be interesting to mention that the Government of Yahya Khan requested the British Government to withdraw the invitation but the British Foreign Office informed them that it could not interfere with the working of the Royal Commonwealth Society which in turn informed that invitation once extended could not be withdrawn. The High Commissioner for Pakistan in U.K., an Ex-officio Vice-President of the Royal Commonwealth Society resigned in protest.*]

As you open newspapers you read that East Pakistanis are fleeing their country, taking shelter in refugee camps and dying in thousands from cholera. But why? What is the

genesis of this holocaust? Who is responsible for this human misery?

As you are aware two countries emerged in the Indian sub-continent in August 1947 when the British Government transferred power to the people. While India had a Constitution within a very short time, Pakistan failed to frame one for a long time. When it ultimately did so in 1956, it was on the basis of parity between majority and minority provinces. The major province of East Bengal had to accept an equal number of seats as obtained in West Pakistan.

Despite this incongruity, the Constitution at least guaranteed fundamental human rights, independence of the judiciary, and many other things we hold so dear. However, before a general election could take place, the Constitution was abrogated and Field-Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan seized power. That election was not allowed to be held, but Ayub Khan soon realised the force of public opinion and appointed a Constitution Commission which was headed by Mr. Justice Shahabuddin, a former Chief Justice of Dacca High Court who was at that time Chief Justice of Pakistan, and who had originally come from Madras and settled in Pakistan. I was a member of that Commission. Although we were chosen by the Field-Marshal our consciences were clear and we knew our duties.

We recommended a Constitution with adult franchise, fundamental human rights, independence of the judiciary, and a very large measure of autonomy in the provinces, despite the fact that a government delegation forcefully advocated—this is on record—a unitary form of government. Even in 1961 they did not want a provincial legislature at all. Then the President wrote to Chief Justice Shahabuddin that he wanted to meet the members of the Commission. At that meeting, Ayub Khan emphasised that there must be a unitary form of government. To this day I recall him saying. 'To do otherwise would be committing hara-kiri.'

After we came away from the President's House in Karachi, I asked the Chairman, 'What are you going to do? A unitary form of government as distinguished from a federal form of government will never be acceptable to people of East Bengal.' The Chairman was very firm in his opinion about a federal form of government. Ultimately, we recom-

mended a representative form of government, but that was not accepted. We recommended it should be a real federal form of government.

The other day I came across the shocking news that Justice Shahabuddin had died. The Pakistan Times of Lahore wrote: "Justice Shahabuddin who retired as Chief Justice of Pakistan in 1960 was one of the ablest constitutional experts in the country. He was chairman during the time of the Constitution Commission and the report submitted by him was not accepted by the regime. This always remained a matter of deep regret for the late Judge and in 1962 he declined a decoration which the government had offered to him".

It was not possible to have a representative form of government without agitation. The recommendation of a Commission constituted by the President himself had not been accepted by him because there was never any intention to transfer power to people. The country was being ruled by a ruthless military regime but yet the President had to bring about some sort of constitution although disregarding our recommendation. In the Constitution of 1962, he gave provincial legislatures limited powers, an electoral college, a 'basic democracy' which was unheard of anywhere else. This, however, did not satisfy anybody.

Ayub Khan steps down

In 1969 there was such an upsurge of feeling that Ayub Khan had to step down. His Commander-in-Chief, Yahya Khan succeeded him. He soon realised, because of the upsurge of feeling, that a promise had to be made about a representative form of government and he announced that an election would be held in December. So far, so good.

However, the people of East Bengal had been suffering for a long time from the frustrations of their hopes and aspirations, and from political domination and economic exploitation. They had seen that although East Bengal was the majority province, the capital was at Karachi. Then, this capital city was given to the Provincial Government of West Pakistan, and another magnificent capital was built at Islamabad in West Pakistan, but nothing was done to improve

communications or to control floods, or to improve the agriculture or the industry of East Bengal.

The central administration was heavily manned by West Pakistani civil servants, and the army was practically manned by West Pakistanis, except for the East Bengal Regiment. Under the influence of feelings about economic and political exploitation, the people of East Bengal went to the polls in December 1971. They voted Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's party, the Awami League, into power, because he promised them six points which gave control of the foreign trade and all other matters to the provinces, so that both the provinces could march forward together, hand in hand, as one Pakistan in the paths of peace and progress, with only foreign affairs and the defence in the federal government.

General Yahya Khan's advisers could not tolerate Sheikh Mujib getting all the seats from East Bengal except two. (His party got 167 seats out of 169.) The military dictatorship felt that time had come when they would be required to transfer power to the elected representatives. This upset them, and they in turn set up Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto who got eighty odd seats in West Pakistan.

The President did not call a meeting of the Constituent Assembly to frame a Constitution. But there was a clamour for it, and he ultimately convened it on 3rd March 1971. But Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto demanded that Sheikh Mujib should compromise on his six points; he should give a guarantee that the members of the Parliament should pass a Constitution agreed to by him. You will appreciate who was obstinate—who put the obstacles in the path of a constitutional development towards a representative form of government for which the people had been aspiring for a long time.

At a Lahore meeting, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto declared that he would boycott the meeting on 3rd March and that he would not allow any Constitution without the consent of his party. In a very fascist manner, he declared that no West Pakistani would be allowed to go. However, disregarding his order, nearly thirty members from West Pakistan went to Dacca. Then under the pressure of the Army junta, General Yahya Khan cancelled the meeting. Sheikh Mujib tried to keep the Pakistanis together; he only expressed his resentment by a very well-known expression of disapproval, a method adopted

by Mahatma Gandhi when he wanted independence—civil disobedience. In this case, the difference was this—the entire population of East Bengal joined in the movement. Nobody worked anywhere. The courts did not function, the Secretariate was empty.

The people of East Pakistan accepted Sheikh Mujib as the legal ruler of East Bengal. At this stage General Yahya Khan offered to negotiate. The Sheikh agreed to it. While keeping him engaged in negotiation, General Yahya Khan brought shiploads of arms and the army from West Pakistan, and then the most tragic event of human history, referred to by me at the outset took place.

It began at midnight on Thursday, 25th March. When my students were sleeping in their halls of residence at the University and the professors were in their apartments with their families and the city of Dacca was asleep, the army moved in, went to my university, shelled the halls of residence and killed the students and teachers. You have read the horrifying reports in the newspapers. You know how the foreign journalists were bundled out of Dacca and were not allowed to bring any photographs or notes out with them. Why? Because the Army had to hide their sins, their crimes.

The nation in East Pakistan rose and a cry went up for independence. A new country emerged which today is Bangladesh. Whether any country has given it recognition or not is a technicality. The reality is that General Yahya's army has destroyed the city; they went to the villages and burnt the huts of the poverty-stricken people who had to carry out agriculture without modern improvements. The whole nation has rejected this army. It is not possible for any authority, anybody, to keep Bangladesh under the control of the invading army. It cannot rule the 75 million people. The sooner this grim reality is recognised the better.

In East Bengal today, I feel, there is no semblance of civilisation. If this is the feeling of one who has never been in politics in his life, you can imagine the feelings of others. My duty is to uphold the rule of law, but I cannot go back to my country because I cannot function in accordance with the oath I had taken to discharge my duties without favour or ill-will and to uphold the rule of law and to defend the Constitution. Under what authority of law did these killings

take place when people were asleep? What remedy can I guarantee them?

In my university there is a mass grave in a hall of residence where dead bodies were thrown into it. I did not hear this from a Bangladesh national but from a British friend who is an eye-witness but has not permitted me to disclose his name.

People's rejection

This is clearly government by murder. It has been rejected by the people of Bangladesh. It is not correct to say that the West Pakistani army and government have full control over East Pakistan. Under gunpoint, some senior officers of the Dacca Secretariate go to Secretariate, and return home under military escort. They have practically no subordinate staff to work. The city of Dacca is dead. More than 70 per cent. of the population have left the city of Dacca, a still higher percentage of employees are away from the Secretariate. The writ of the government does not reach any village; courts there cannot function.

You cannot rule a country by tyranny or by terrorising people. The army has killed Pakistan. The sole responsibility for the destruction of Pakistan lies on Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and the army junta. I have never discriminated in my life between a Hindu or a Muslim, Christian or a Buddhist, or an East Pakistani or a West Pakistani. But the rule of Yahya Khan today is the rule of West Pakistan over East Bengal, and the people of East Bengal now feel that it is no longer a Pakistan by consent; it is conquest by army. Since it is now sought to reduce us to the status of a colony we must get back our territory and throw out the invading army.

We are a betrayed nation. We are different in habits, in culture, in language. We constitute a separate people. Under the Charter of the United Nations, we have been guaranteed the right of self-determination, and it is now an article of faith with us that we must exercise this right of self-determination. While we must not lose sight of the colossal human misery, we must treat the disease itself and not the symptom. That can only be done by recognising a reality, and that is the will of the people of Bangladesh.

Without recognition of that reality, if we stick to mere technicality, we shall not be able to trace the genesis of the suffering and we shall not be able to bring permanent peace in the subcontinent.

Today, the troubles could lead to a continental war. There is a potential threat to peace ; the people of East Bengal refuse to be politically dominated and economically exploited by West Pakistan any longer.

Foreign aid taken in our name is spent in developing the industries of West Pakistan ; foreign earnings by the sale of our jute and our tea are spent in West Pakistan. Therefore, we must be independent, and must have control of our own foreign earnings. With this and with the foreign aid we shall be receiving, we will be able to develop our agriculture and our industries. We shall build up a prosperous sovereign republic of Bangladesh. We shall have a policy of non-alignment.

THE SUNDAY TIMES June 13, 1971

GENOCIDE : By—ANTHONY MASCARENHAS

[A Sunday Times reporter comes out of Pakistan with the horrifying story of why five million have fled].

WEST PAKISTAN'S Army has been systematically massacring thousands of civilians in East Pakistan since the end of March. This is the horrifying reality behind the news blackout imposed by President Yahya Khan's government since the end of March. This is the reason why more than five million refugees have streamed out of East Pakistan into India, risking cholera and famine.

The curtain of silence is broken today for the first time by Anthony Mascarenhas, the Sunday Times correspondent in Pakistan. He has seen what the Pakistan army has been doing. He has left Pakistan to tell the world.

The army has not merely been killing supporters of the idea of Bangla Desh, an independent East Bengal. It has

deliberately been massacring others, Hindus and Bengali Muslims. Hindus have been shot and beaten to death with clubs simply because they are Hindus. Villages have been burned.

Sporadic and unconfirmed reports of atrocities by the Pakistan army have been reaching the outside world for some time, notably from refugees, missionaries and diplomats. The report by Anthony Mascarenhas—appearing in full on pages twelve to fourteen today—is a detailed eye-witness account of unique precision and authority. He supplies the missing centre-piece of the tragedy of Bengal: why the refugees have fled.

There is a remarkable story behind Anthony Mascarenhas's report.

When, at the end of March, the Pakistan army flew two divisions into East Pakistan to "sort out" the Bengali rebels, it moved in secret. But about two weeks later the Pakistan government invited eight Pakistani journalists to fly to East Bengal. The idea—as government officials left the journalists in no doubt—was to give the people of West Pakistan a reassuring picture of the "return to normalcy" in the eastern half of the country. Seven of the journalists have done as they were intended. But one was Mascarenhas, who is assistant editor of the Morning News in Karachi, and was also The Sunday Times Pakistan correspondent.

On Tuesday, May 18, he arrived, unexpectedly, in the The Sunday Times office in London. There was, he told us, a story he wanted to write: the true story of what had happened in East Bengal to drive five million people to flight.

He made it plain that he understood that if he wrote his story there could be no going back to Karachi for him. He said he had made up his mind to leave Pakistan: to give up his house, most of his possessions and his job as one of the most respected journalists in the country. There was only one condition we must not publish his story until he had gone back into Pakistan and brought out his wife and five children.

The Sunday Times agreed, and Mascarenhas went back to Karachi. After a wait of ten days an overseas cable arrived at the private address of a Sunday Times executive.

"Export formalities completed," it read, "Shipment begins Monday."

Mascarenhas had succeeded in getting permission for his wife and family to leave the country. He himself had been forbidden to leave. He found a way of leaving anyway.

On the last leg of his journey inside Pakistan, he found himself sitting in a plane across the aisle from a senior Ministry of Information official whom he knew well. A phone call from the airport could have led to his arrest.

There was no phone call, however, and last Tuesday he arrived back in London.

Mascarenhas writes about what he saw in East Pakistan with special authority and objectivity. As a Goan Christian by descent, he is neither a Hindu nor a Muslim. Having lived most of his life in what is now Pakistan, having held a Pakistani passport since the State was created in 1947, and having enjoyed the confidence of many of the leaders of Pakistan since that time, he wrote his report with real personal regret.

"We were told by the Ministry of Information officials to show in a patriotic way the great job the army was doing," he told us.

There was no question of his reporting what he saw for his own paper. He was allowed to file a story, which was published in The Sunday Times on May 2, which reported only the events of March 25/26, when the Bengali troops mutinied and atrocities were committed against non-Bengalis.

Even references to the danger of famine were deleted by the censor. That increased his crisis of conscience.

After some days' hesitation, he decided, in his own words, that "either I would write the full story of what I had seen, or I would have to stop writing: I would never again be able to write with any integrity." And so he got on a plane and came to London.

We have been able to check his story in great detail with other refugees in a position to have had a wide knowledge of events in East Bengal as a whole, and with objective diplomatic sources.

EDITORIAL:
STOP THE KILLING

BY DEVOTING the whole of its centre pages to one article about East Pakistan, The Sunday Times has taken a considered and exceptional step. We have done so first because this is the fullest authoritative, first-hand account so far available of the acts and intentions of the central Pakistan Government in its eastern province. Secondly, because the story itself is so horrifyingly revealing about what the millions of refugees are fleeing from, that it needs to be told at length. The Sunday Times has checked as far as possible the accuracy of this report. But in any event, we have the fullest confidence in the integrity of our reporter, who has himself abandoned home and career in Pakistan to bring the news to the world.

The present crisis would never have arisen had it not been for Yahya Khan's commendable wish to end the military dictatorship in Pakistan by calling, last autumn, for general elections. The outlet for Bengali nationalism which those elections provided later lit the fire which has been so brutally extinguished. But long before that the seeds of disunity and dissension were sown when, in 1947, the State of Pakistan was created in two unequal sections. From that day to this, the Bengali people of East Pakistan have, justifiably, felt themselves to be the unequal partner, the poor relation in a state to whose general economy they in fact contribute a large part. Moreover, in the present welter of blood and persecution, the Bengalis themselves, as our story makes plain, must bear some responsibility for their acts of retributive violence against non-Bengalis.

But when all this has been said, there is no escaping the terrible charge of deliberate, premeditated extermination levelled by the facts against the present Pakistani Government. Yahya Khan may conceivably mean what he says when he speaks of a return to civilian rule and normality. But how, after what has happened, can be Pakistani Government persuade what is left of the Bengali leadership that they are brothers and equal members of the same nation?

With the Army still operating on a directive to enforce submission to the Central Government, there is the danger that if the Western Powers to whom Pakistan is now appeal-

ing for financial aid respond positively, that aid will contribute, directly or indirectly, to the army's gruesome operations. Yet totally to withold this and other aid would simply condemn Pakistan to economic disintegration with all the extra human suffering involved.

The most hopeful formula is for the Western countries concerned, Britain among them, to make the grant of extra aid dependent upon Yahya Khan's readiness to institute a new deal for East Pakistan and specifically to ensure that his army desists from excesses. While the United Nations and the voluntary, relief organisations should stand out for control over relief operations in East Pakistan, nothing can alter the fact that Pakistan is a sovereign country which cannot be forced to do what she does not want to do. The best, indeed the only safeguard, is to direct, wherever and whenever it is possible, the spotlight of publicity upon the words and deeds of the Pakistani Government in the hope that the pressure of world opinion will in the end have some effect.

Exactly what form a new deal for East Pakistan should take is very difficult to say. Whatever it is, it is unlikely that the bulk of the refugees now in India, most of them Hindus, will ever be willing to return to East Pakistan. In the present fog of war and atrocity, one thing stands out all too clearly. It is that Yahya Khan's terrible mistake, and its terrible consequences, have created a new area of instability in Asia and the world; an area comparable, in its racial and territorial elements, with the Middle East, and likely, in the future, to cause just as much misery to its inhabitants and concern to the outside world.

GENOCIDE: FULL REPORT

By : **ANTHONY MASCARENHAS**

[The back ground to the writing and publication of this remarkable report is told on Page 112.]

ABDUL BARI had run out of luck . Like thousands of other people in East Bengal, he had made the mistake—the fatal mistake—of running within sight of a Pakistani army patrol.

He was 24 years old, a slight man surrounded by soldiers. He was trembling, because he was about to be shot.

"Normally we would have killed him as he ran," I was informed chattily by Major Rathore, the G-2 Ops. of the 9th Division, as we stood on the outskirts of a tiny village near Mudafarganj, about 20 miles south of Comilla. "But we are checking him out for your sake. You are new here and I see you have a squeamish stomach."

"Why kill him?" I asked with mounting concern.

"Because he might be a Hindu or he might be a rebel, perhaps a student or an Awami Leaguer. They know we are sorting them out and they betray themselves by running."

"But why are you killing them? And why pick on the Hindus?" I persisted.

"Must I remind you." Rathore said severely, "how they have tried to destroy Pakistan? Now under the cover of the fighting we have an excellent opportunity of finishing them off."

"Of course," he added hastily, "we are only killing the Hindu men. We are soldiers, not cowards like the rebels. They kill our women and children."

I WAS GETTING my first glimpse of the stain of blood which has spread over the otherwise verdant land of East Bengal. First it was the massacre of the non-Bengalis in a savage outburst of Bengali hatred. Now it was massacre, deliberately carried out by the West Pakistan army.

The pogrom's victims are not only the Hindus of East Bengal—who constitute about 10 per cent of the 75 million population—but also many thousands of Bengali Muslims. These include university and college students, teachers, Awami League and Left-Wing political cadres and every one the army can catch of the 176,000 Bengali militarymen and police who mutinied on March 26 in a spectacular, though untimely and ill-started bid to create an independent Republic of Bangla Desh.

What I saw and heard with unbelieving eyes and ears during my 10 days in East Bengal in late April made it terribly clear that the killings are not the isolated acts of military commanders in the field.

The West Pakistani soldiers are not the only ones who have been killing in East Bengal, of course. On the night of

March 25—and this I was allowed to report by the Pakistani censor—the Bengali troops and paramilitary units stationed in East Pakistan mutinied and attacked non-Bengalis with atrocious savagery.

Thousands of families of unfortunate Muslims, many of them refugees from Bihar who chose Pakistan at the time of the partition riots in 1947, were mercilessly wiped out. Women were raped, or had their breasts torn out with specially-fashioned knives. Children did not escape the horror: the lucky ones were killed with their parents; but many thousands of others must go through what life remains for them with eyes gouged out and limbs roughly amputated. More than 20,000 bodies of non-Bengalis have been found in the main towns, such as Chittagong, Khulna and Jessore. The real toll, I was told everywhere in East Bengal, may have been as high as 100,000; for thousands of non-Bengalis have vanished without a trace.

The government of Pakistan has let the world know about that first horror. What it has suppressed is the second and worse horror which followed when its own army took over the killing. West Pakistani officials privately calculate that altogether both sides have killed 250,000 people—not counting those who have died of famine and disease.

Reacting to the almost successful breakaway of the province, which has more than half the country's population, General Yahya Khan's military government is pushing through its own "final solution" of the East Bengal problem.

"We are determined to cleanse East Pakistan once and for all of the threat of secession, even if it means killing off two million people and ruling the province as a colony for 30 years," I was repeatedly told by senior military and civil officers in Dacca and Comilla.

The West Pakistan army in East Bengal is doing exactly that with a terrifying thoroughness.

WE HAD BEEN racing against the setting sun after a visit to Chandpur (the West Pakistan army prudently stays indoors at night in East Bengal) when one of the *jawans* (privates) crouched in the back of the Toyota Land Cruiser called out sharply: "There's a man running, Sahib."

Major Rathore brought the vehicle to an abrupt halt, simultaneously reaching for the Chinesemade light machine-gun propped against the door. Less than 200 yards away a man could be seen loping through the knee-high paddy.

"For God's sake don't shoot," I cried. "He's unarmed. He's only a villager."

Rathore gave me a dirty look and fired a warning burst.

As the man sank to a crouch in the lush carpet of green, two *jawans* were already on their way to drag him in.

The thud of a rifle butt across the shoulders preceded the questioning.

"Who are you ?"

"Mercy, Sahib ! My name is Abdul Bari. I'm a tailor from the New Market in Dacca."

"Don't lie to me. You're a Hindu. Why were you running?"

"It's almost curfew time, Sahib, and I was going to my village."

"Tell me the truth. Why were you running ?"

Before the man could answer he was quickly frisked for weapons by a *jawan* while another quickly snatched away his *lungi.* The skinny body that was bared revealed the distinctive traces of circumcision, which is obligatory for Muslims.

The truckloads of human targets

At least it could be plainly seen that Bari was not a Hindu.

The interrogation proceeded.

"Tell me, why were you running ?"

By this time Bari, wild-eyed and trembling violently, could not answer. He buckled at the knees.

"He looks like a *fauji,* sir," volunteered one *jawan* as Bari was hauled to his feet. (Fauji is the Urdu word for soldier, the army uses it for the Bengali rebels it is hounding.)

"Could be," I heard Rathore mutter grimly.

Abdul Bari was clouted several times with the butt end of a rifle, then ominously pushed against a wall. Mercifully

his screams brought a young head peeping from the shadows of a nearby hut. Bari shouted something in Bengali. The head vanished. Moments later a bearded old man came haltingly from the hut. Rathore pounced on him.

"Do you know this man?"

"Yes, Sahib. He is Abdul Bari."

"Is he a *fauji* ?"

"No, Sahib, he is a tailor from Dacca."

"Tell me the truth."

"Khuda Kassam (God's oath), Sahib, he is a tailor."

There was a sudden silence. Rathore looked abashed as I told him "For God's sake let him go. What more proof do you want of his innocence ?"

But the *jawans* were apparently unconvinced and kept milling around Bari. It was only after I had once more interceded on his behalf that Rathore ordered Bari to be released. By that time he was a crumpled, speechless heap of terror. But his life had been saved.

Others have not been as fortunate.

For six days as I travelled with the officers of the 9th Division headquarters at Comilla I witnessed at close quarters the extent of the killing. I saw Hindus, hunted from village to village and door to door, shot offhand after a cursory "short-arm inspection" showed they were uncircumcised. I have heard the screams of men bludgeoned to death in the compound of the Circuit House (civil administrative headquarters) in Comilla. I have seen truckloads of other human targets and those who had the humanity to try to help them hauled off "for disposal" under the cover of darkness and curfew. I have witnessed the brutality of "kill and burn missions" as the army units, after clearing out the rebels, pursued the pogrom in the towns and the villages.

I have seen whole villages devastated by "punitive action." And in the officers mess at night I have listened incredulously as otherwise brave and honourable men proudly chewed over the day's kill.

"How many did you get ?"

The answers are seared in my memory.

ALL THIS is being done, as any West Pakistani officer will tell you, for the "preservation of the unity, the integrity and the ideology of Pakistan." It is, of course, too late for that. The very military action that is designed to hold together the two wings of the country, separated by a thousand miles of India, has confirmed the ideological and emotional break. East Bengal can only be kept in Pakistan by the heavy hand of the army. And the army is dominated by the Punjabis, who traditionally despise and dislike the Bengalis.

The break is so complete today that few Bengalis will willingly be seen in the company of a West Pakistani. I had a distressing experience of this kind during my visit to Dacca when I went to visit an old friend. "I'm sorry," he told me as he turned away, "things have changed. The Pakistan that you and I knew has ceased to exist. Let us put it behind us."

Hours later a Punjabi army officer, talking about the massacre of the non-Bengalis before the army moved in, told me: "They have treated us more brutally than the Sikhs did in the partition riots in 1947. How can we ever forgive or forget this?"

The bone-crushing military operation has two distinctive features. One is what the authorities like to call "cleansing process": a euphemism for massacre. The other is the "rehabilitation effort." This is a way of describing the moves to turn East Bengal into a docile colony of West Pakistan. These commonly used expressions and the repeated official references to "miscreants" and "infiltrators" are part of the charade which is being enacted for the benefit of the world. Strip away the propaganda, and the reality is colonisation—and killing.

The justification for the annihilation of the Hindus was paraphrased by Lt.-Gen. Tikka Khan, the military governor of East Pakistan, in a radio broadcast I heard on April 18. He said: "The Muslims of East Pakistan, who had played a leading part in the creation of Pakistan, are determined to keep it alive. However, the voice of the vast majority had been suppressed through coercion, threats to life and property by a vocal, violent and aggressive minority, which forced the Awami League to adopt the destructive course."

Others, speaking privately, were more blunt in seeking justification.

"The Hindus had completely undermined the Muslim masses with their money," Col. Naim, of 9th Division headquarters, told me in the officers mess at Comilla. They bled the province white. Money, food and produce flowed across the borders to India. In some cases they made up more than half the teaching staff in the colleges and schools, and sent their own children to be educated in Calcutta. It had reached the point where Bengali culture was in fact Hindu culture, and East Pakistan was virtually under the control of the Marwari businessmen in Calcutta. We have to sort them out to restore the land of the people, and the people to their Faith."

Or take Major Bashir. He came up from the ranks. He is SSO of the 9th Division at Comilla and he boasts of a personal bodycount of 28. He had his own reasons for what has happened. "This is a war between the pure and the impure," he informed me over a cup of green tea. "The people here may have Muslim names and call themselves Muslims. But they are Hindus at heart. You won't believe that the *maulvi* (mulla) of the Cantonment mosque here issued a fatwa (edict) during Friday prayers that the people would attain *jannat* (paradise) if they killed West Pakistanis. We sorted the bastard out and we are now sorting out the others. Those who are left will be real Muslims. We will even teach them Urdu."

Everywhere I found officers and men fashioning imaginative garments of justification from the fabric of their own prejudices. Scapegoats had to be found to legitimise, even for their own consciences, the dreadful "solution" to what in essence was a political problem: the Bengalis won the election and wanted to rule. The Punjabis whose ambitions and interests have dominated government policies since the founding of Pakistan in 1947, would brook no erosion of their power. The army backed them up.

Officials privately justify what has been done as a retaliation for the massacre of the non-Bengalis before the army moved in. But events suggest that the pogrom was not the result of a spontaneous or undisciplined reaction. It was planned.

It seems clear that the "sorting-out" began to be planned about the time that Lt.-Gen. Tikka Khan took over the governorship of East Bengal, from the gentle, self-effacing

Admiral Ahsan, and the military command there, from the scholarly Lt.-Gen. Sahibzada Khan. That was at the beginning of March, when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's civil disobedience movement was gathering momentum after the postponement of the assembly meeting from which the Bengalis hoped for so much. President Yahya Khan, it is said, acquiesced in the tide of resentment caused in the top echlons of the military establishment by the increasing humiliation of the West Pakistani troops stationed in East Bengal. The Punjabi Eastern Command at Dacca continues to dominate the policies of the Central Government. [It is perhaps worth pointing out that the Khans are not related : Khan is a common surname in Pakistan.]

When the army units fanned out in Dacca on the evening of March 25, in pre-emptive strikes against the mutiny planned for the small hours of the next morning, many of them carried lists of people to be liquidated. These included the Hindus and large numbers of Muslims ; students, Awami Leaguers, professors, journalists and those who had been prominent in Sheikh Mujib's movement. The charge, now publicly made, that the army was subjected to mortar attack from the Jagannath Hall, where the Hindu University students lived, hardly justifies the obliteration of two Hindu colonies, built around the temples on Ramna racecourse, and a third in Shankharipatti, in the heart of the old city. Nor does it explain why the sizeable Hindu populations of Dacca and the neighbouring industrial town of Narayanganj should have vanished so completely during the round-the-clock curfew on March 26 and 27. There is similarly no trace of scores of Muslims who were rounded up during the curfew hours. These people were eliminated in a planned operation : an improvised response to Hindu aggression would have had vastly different results.

A pencil flick, a man 'disposed'

Touring Dacca on April 15 I found the heads of four students lying rotting on the roof of the Iqbal Hall hostel. The caretaker said they had been killed on the night of March 25. I also found heavy traces of blood on the two staircases and in four of the rooms. Behind Iqbal Hall a large residential building seemed to have been singled out for special

attention by the army. The walls were pitted with bullet holes and a foul smell still lingered on the staircase, although it had been heavily powdered with DDT. Neighbours said the bodies of 23 women and children had been carted away only hours before. They had been decomposing on the roof since March 25. It was only after much questioning that I was able to ascertain that the victims belonged to the near-by Hindu shanties. They had sought shelter in the building as the army closed in.

THIS IS GENOCIDE conducted with amazing casualness. Sitting in the office of Major Agha, Martial Law Administrator of Comilla City, on the morning of April 19, I saw the off-hand manner in which sentences were meted out. A Bihari sub-inspector of police had walked in with a list of prisoners being held in the police lock-up. Agha looked it over. Then, with a flick of his pencil, he casually ticked off four names on the list.

"Bring these four to me this evening for disposal," he said. He looked at the list again. The pencil flicked once more. "..and bring this thief along with them."

The death sentence had been pronounced over, a glass of coconut milk. I was informed that two of the prisoners were Hindus, the third a "student," and the fourth an Awami league organiser. The "thief," it transpired, was a lad named Sebastian who had been caught moving the household effects of a Hindu friend to his own house.

Later that evening I saw these men, their hands and legs tied loosely with a single rope, being led down the road to the Circuit House compound. A little after curfew, which was at 6 o'clock, a flock of squawking mynah birds were disturbed in their play by the thwacking sound of wooden clubs meeting bone and flesh.

CAPTAIN AZMAT of the Baluch Regiment had two claims to fame according to the mess banter. One was his job as ADC to Major-Gen. Shaukat Raza, commanding officer of the 9th Division. The other was thrust on him by his col-leagues' ragging.

Azmat, it transpired, was the only officer in the group who had not made a "kill." Major Bashir needled him mercilessly.

"Come on Azmat," Bashir told him one night, "we are going to make a man of you. Tomorrow we will see how you can make them run. It's so easy."

To underscore the point Bashir went into one of his long spiels. Apart from his duties as SSO, Bashir was also "education officer" at Headquarters. He was the only Punjabi officer I found who could speak Bengali fluently. By general agreement Bashir was also a selftaught bore who gloried in the sound of his own voice.

A *dhari walla* (bearded man), we were told, had come to see Bashir that morning to inquire about his brother, a prominent Awami League organiser of Comilla who had been netted by the army some days earlier. *Dhor gaya,* Bashir said he told him : "he has run away." The old man couldn't comprehend how his brother could have escaped on a broken leg. Neither could I. So Major Bashir, with a broad wink, enlightened me.

The record would show *Dhor gaya* : "shot while escaping."

I NEVER DID find out whether Captain Azmat got his kill. The rebel Bengali forces who had dug in at Feni, seventy miles north of Chittagong on the highway to Comilla, had tied down the 9th Division by destroying all the bridges and culverts in the area. General Raza was getting hell from Eastern Command at Dacca which was anxious to have the south-eastern border sealed against escaping rebels. It was also desperately urgent to open this only land route to the north to much-needed supplies that had been piling up in the port at Chittagong.

So General Raza was understandably waspish. He flew over the area almost daily. He also spent hours haranguing the bridge that was bogged down at Feni. Captain Azmat, as usual, was the General's shadow. I did not see him again. But if experience is any pointer, Azmat probably had to sweat out his "kill"—and the ragging—for another three weeks. It was only on May 8 that the 9th Division was able to clear Feni and the surrounding area. By then the Bengali rebels, forced out by relentless bombing and artillery barrages, had escaped with their weapons across the neighbouring border into India.

The escape of such large numbers of armed, hard-core regulars among the Bengali rebels was a matter of grave

concern to Lt.-Gen. Aslam Baig, G-1 at 9th Division headquarters. "The Indians," he explained, will obviously not allow them to settle there. It would be too dangerous. So they will be allowed in on sufferance as long as they keep making sorties across the border. Unless we can kill them off, we are going to have serious trouble for a long time."

Lt.-Col. Baig was a popular artillery officer who had done a stint in China after the India-Pakistan war when units of the Pakistan army were converting to Chinese equipment. He was said to be a proud family man. He also loved flowers. He told me with unconcealed pride that during a previous posting at Comilla he had brought from China the giant scarlet waterlilies that adorn the pond opposite headquarters. Major Bashir adored him. Extolling one officer's decisiveness, Bashir told me that once they had caught a rebel officer; there was a big fuss about what should be done with him. "While the others were telephoning all over for instructions," he said, "he solved the problem. *Dhor gaya.* Only the man's foot was left sticking out of the ditch."

IT IS HARD to imagine so much brutality in the midst of so much beauty. Comilla was blooming when I went there towards the end of April. The rich green carpet of rice paddies spreading to the horizon on both sides of the road was broken here and there by bright splashes of red. That was the *Gol Mohor,* aptly dubbed the "Flame of the Forest," coming to full bloom. Mango and coconut trees in the villages dotting the countryside were heavy with fruit. Even the terrier-sized goats skipping across the road gave evidence of the abundance of nature in Bengal. "The only way you can tell the male from the female," they told me, "is that all the she-goats are pregnant."

Fire and murder their vengeance

In one of the most crowded areas of the entire world—Comilla district has a population density of 1,900 to the square mile—only man was nowhere to be seen.

"Where are the Bengalis ?" I had asked my escorts in the strangely empty streets of Dacca a few days earlier. "They have gone to the villages," was the stock reply. Now, in the countryside, there were still no Bengalis. Comilla town,

like Dacca, was heavily shuttered. And in ten miles on the road to Laksham, past silent villages, the peasants I saw could have been counted on the fingers of both hands.

There were, of course, soldiers—hundreds of unsmiling men in khaki, each with an automatic rifle. According to orders, the rifles never left their hands. The roads are constantly patrolled by tough, trigger-happy men. Wherever the army is, you won't find Bengalis.

Martial law orders, constantly repeated on the radio and in the Press, proclaim the death penalty for anyone caught in the act of sabotage. If a road is obstructed or a bridge damaged or destroyed, all houses within 100 yards of the spot are liable to be demolished and their inhabitants rounded up.

The practice is even more terrible than anything the words could suggest. "Punitive action" is something that the Bengalis have come to dread.

We saw what this meant when we were approaching Hajiganj, which straddles the road to Chandpur, on the morning of April 17. A few miles before Hajiganj, a 15-foot bridge had been damaged the previous night by rebels who were still active in the area. According to Major Rathore (G-2 Ops.) an army unit had immediately been sent out to take punitive action. Long spirals of smoke could be seen on all sides up to a distance of a quarter of a mile from the damaged bridge. And as we carefully drove over a bed of wooden boards, with which it had been hastily repaired, we could see house in the village on the right beginning to catch fire.

At the back of the village some *jawans* were spreading the flames with dried coconut fronds. They make excellent kindling and are normally used for cooking. We could also see a body sprawled between the coconut trees at the entrance to the village. On the other side of the road another village in the rice paddies showed evidence of the fire that had gutted more than a dozen bamboo and mat huts. Hundreds of villagers had escaped before the army came. Others, like the man among the coconut trees, were slow to get away.

As we drove on, Major Rathore said. "They brought it on themselves." I said it was surely too terrible a vengeance on innocent people for the acts of a handful of rebels. He did not answer.

A FEW HOURS later when we were again passing through Hajiganj on the way back from Chandpur, I had my first exposure to the savagery of a "kill and burn mission."

We were still caught up in the aftermath of a tropical storm which had hit the area that afternoon. A heavy overcast made ghostly shadows on the mosque towering above the town. Light drizzle was beginning to wet the uniforms of Captain Azhar and the four *jawans* riding in the exposed escort jeep behind us.

We turned a corner and found a convoy of trucks parked outside the mosque. I counted seven, all filled with *jawans* in battledress. At the head of the column was a jeep. Across the road two men, supervised by a third, were trying to batter down the door of one of more than a hundred shuttered shops lining the road. The studded teak wood door was beginning to give under the combined assault of two axes as Major Rathore brought the Toyota to a halt.

"What the hell are you doing?"

The tallest of the trio, who was supervising the break in, turned and peered at us. "*Mota,*" (Fatty) he shouted, "what the hell do you think we are doing?"

Recognising the voice, Rathore grew a water-melon smile. It was, he informed me, his old friend "Ifty"—Major Iftikhar of the 12th Frontier Force Rifles.

Rathore: "I thought someone was looting."

Iftikhar: "Looting? No. We are on kill and burn."

Waving his hand to take in the shops, he said he was going to destroy the lot.

Rathore: "How many did you get?"

Iftikhar smiled bashfully.

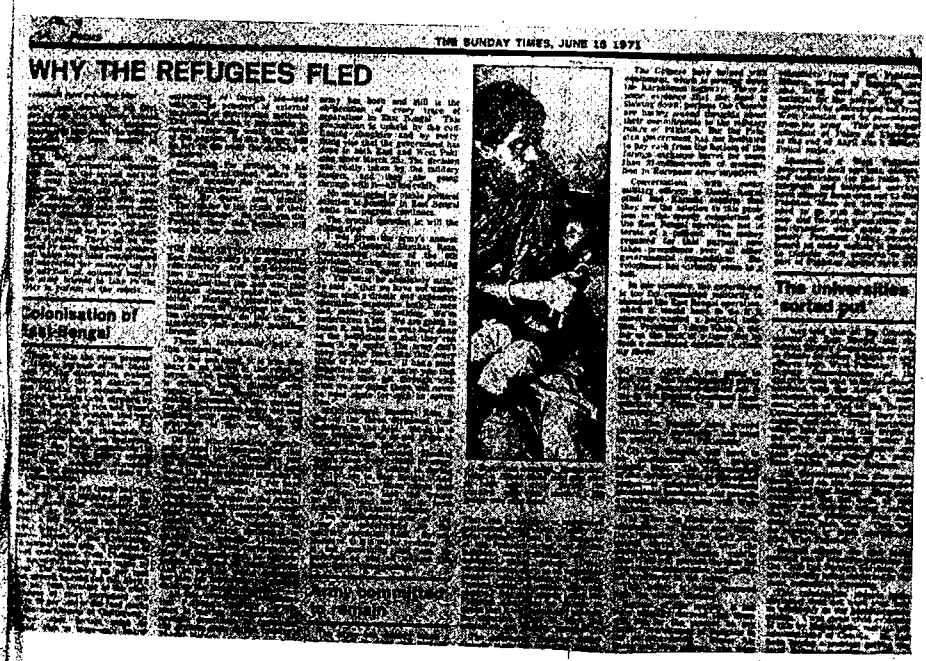
Rathore: "Come on. How many did you get?"

Iftikhar: "Only twelve. And by God we were lucky to get them. We would have lost those, too, if I hadn't sent my men from the back."

Prodded by Major Rathore, Iftikhar then went on to describe vividly how after much searching in Hajiganj he had discovered twelve Hindus hiding in a house on the outskirts of the town. These had been "disposed of." Now Major Iftikhar was on the second part of his mission: burn.



Sewerage pipes have become valuable hearth for refugees in India.
Newsweek : 2-8-71.



THE SUNDAY TIMES, JUNE 13 1971

WHY THE REFUGEES FLED

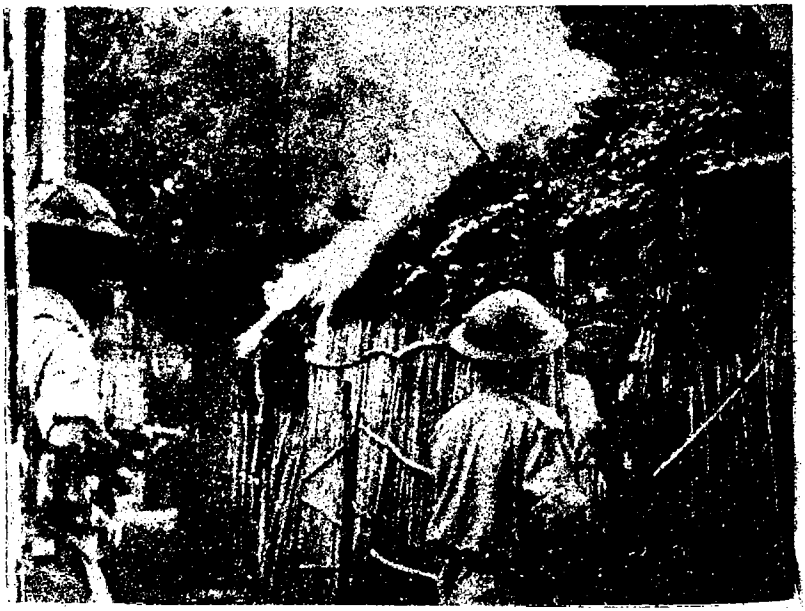
Colonisation of East Bengal

The unbearable started gust

Sunday Times : 13-6-71.



West Pakistani prisoners at Kushtia Jail.
Time : 12-4-71.



Pakistani soldiers setting fire to a village.
From a Booklet published in Mujib Nagar.



"For ye are living poems".
From a Booklet published by Calcutta University.



Pakistani troops examining whether he is Muslim or Hindu.

Bangladesh Guerrillas

"We will win in the end."

Time : 2-8-71.



Time : 29-11-71.

INDIA

Not If, But When

When Prime Minister Indira Gandhi returned home from her three-week tour of Western nations last week, one of the first things she did was to go before her hawkish Parliament and plead for patience toward her handling of the crisis with Pakistan. The urgent need for a solution was all too apparent. Officials in New Delhi said that the biggest frontier battle yet between Indians and Pakistanis occurred when 2,800 Pakistani regulars crossed the border into West Bengal. Defense Minister Jagjivan Ram rose in Parliament to say that if India was attacked, it would "carry the war into Pakistan." Indians across the country, meanwhile, were placing bets on when—not if—war with Pakistan would take place.

Nonetheless, Mrs. Gandhi was evidently hopeful that the civil war between East and West Pakistan could be settled without a full-scale war. Her trip abroad for Bengali refugee relief (*see chart*), India is still faced with a financial burden that is expected to reach $830 million by the end of the fiscal year next March. With a 1970 gross national product of only $50 billion and a population of 560 million, India can scarcely afford such a drain on its economy.

Communal Tensions. Beyond the financial cost, the presence of 9,700,000 refugees threatens to create social turmoil and revive communal tensions. There are 7,000,000 in West Bengal alone, and still they come. The Indian government, moreover, is fearful that many of the refugees, particularly the Hindus who were singled out for persecution by Pakistan's Moslem military, will refuse to return to their homes.

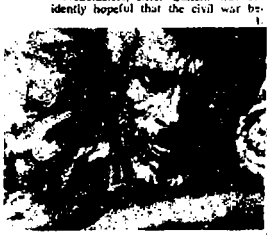
Last March, when the exodus began, thousands of Indians living in the border areas rushed forward to offer assistance. Hindu families took in Moslem refugees, and Moslem families took in Hindus. But as the refugees poured in by the millions, the initial warmth began to cool. Many Indians began to resent the refugees' presence, and clashes are taking place every day. Camp officials deprive food rations and if you go to [illegible] officials get help from local people to beat you up.

The Big Problem. While there has so far been a remarkable lack of the bitter Hindu-Moslem religious tensions that so often led to widespread massacres at the time of the 1947 partition, the economic and population strains on West Bengal have become extremely acute. Already suffering from overcrowding and underemployment, the state has suffered severely economically from the influx of some 4,000,000 predominantly Hindu refugees, who fled to West Bengal when East Bengal chose to become part of Pakistan. Refugees have overwhelmed the state's transportation facilities, and the cost of food has nearly doubled.

Numerous incidents indicate that impoverished local people find it hard to accept even the minimal care given the refugees. Says Farmer Jogen Mandal: "These people are crooks. Each of them has three ration cards. Part of the ration they consume and the rest they sell. They get free medical treatment, and they are much better off than most of us." Replies Bhabendra Nath Roy, former vice principal of Manirampur College in East Pakistan and now a refugee: "We know local people do not like us, but we have been driven out. Killing is taking place every day. Camp officials deprive us of rations and if you go to [illegible] officials get help from local people to beat us up."



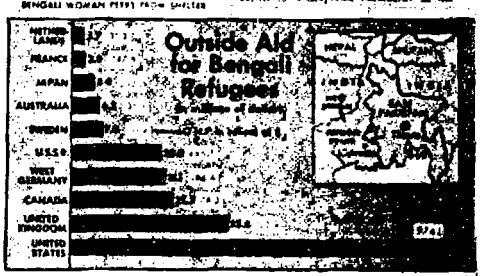
BENGALI WOMAN PETS FROM SHELTER



REFUGEE CARRIES 100-YEAR-OLD MOTHER



INFANT CRIES
Earthly reward for turmoil



By this time the shop's door had been demolished and we found ourselves looking into one of those tiny catch-all establishments which, in these parts, go under the title "Medical & Stores." Under the Bengali lettering the sign-board carried in English the legend "Ashok Medical & Stores." Lower down was painted 'Prop. A. M. Bose." Mr. Bose, like the rest of the people of Hajiganj, had locked and run.

In front of the shop a small display cabinet was crammed with patent medicines, cough syrups, some bottles of mango squash, imitation jewellery, reels of coloured thread and packets of knicker elastic. Iftikhar kicked it over, smashing the light woodwork into kindling. Next he reached out for some jute shopping bags on one shelf. He took some plastic toys from another. A bundle of handkerchiefs and a small bolt of red cloth joined the pile on the floor. Iftikhar heaped them all together and borrowed a box from one of the jawans sitting in our Toyota. The jawan had ideas of his own. Jumping from the vehicle he ran to the shop and tried to pull down one of the umbrellas hanging from the low ceiling of the shop. Iftikhar ordered him out.

Looting, he was sharply reminded, was against orders.

Iftikhar soon had a fire going. He threw burning jute bags into one corner of the shop, the bolt of cloth into another. The shop began to blaze. Within minutes we could hear the crackle of flames behind shuttered doors as the fire spread to the shop on the left, then on to the next one.

At this point Rathore was beginning to get anxious about the gathering darkness. So we drove on.

When I chanced to meet Major Iftikhar the next day he ruefully told me, "I burnt only sixty houses. If it hadn't rained I would have got the whole bloody lot."

Approaching a village a few miles from Mudafarganj we were forced to a halt by what appeared to be a man crouching against a mud wall. One of the *jawans* warned it might be a *fauji* sniper. But after careful scouting it turned out to be a lovely young Hindu girl. She sat there with the placidity of her people, waiting for God knows who. One of the *jawans* had been ten years with the East Pakistan Rifles and could speak bazaar Bengali. He was told to order her into the village. She mumbled something in reply, but stayed where she was, but was ordered a second time. She

was still sitting there as we drove away. "She has," I was informed, "nowhere to go—no family, no home."

Major Iftikhar was one of several officers assigned to kill and burn missions. They moved in after the rebels had been cleared by the army with the freedom to comb out and destroy Hindus and "miscreants" (the official jargon for rebels) and to burn down everything in the areas from which the army had been fired at.

This lanky Punjabi officer liked to talk about his job. Riding with Iftikhar to the Circuit House in Comilla on another occasion he told me about his latest exploit.

"We got an old one," he said. "The bastard had grown a beard and was posing as a devout Muslim. Even called himself Abdul Manan. But we gave him a medical inspection and the game was up."

Iftikhar continued: "I wanted to finish him there and then, but my men told me such a bastard deserved three shots. So I gave him one in the balls, then one in the stomach. Then I finished him off with a shot in the head."

When I left Major Iftikhar he was headed north to Brahmanbaria. His mission: another kill and burn.

OVERWHELMED WITH TERROR, the Bengalis have one of two reactions. Those who can run away just seem to vanish. Whole towns have been abandoned as the army approached. Those who can't run adopt a cringing servility which only adds humiliation to their plight.

Chandpur was an example of the first.

In the past this key river port on the Meghna was noted for its thriving business houses and gay life. At night thousands of small country boats anchored on the river's edge made it a fairyland of lights. On April 18 Chandpur was deserted. No people, no boats. Barely one per cent of the population had remained. The rest, particularly the Hindus who constituted nearly half the population, had fled.

Weirdly they had left behind thousands of *Pakistani* flags fluttering from every house, shop and rooftop. The effect was like a national day celebration without the crowds. It only served to emphasise the haunted look.

The flags were by way of insurance.

Somehow the word had got around that the army considered any structure without a Pakistani flag to be hostile and consequently to be destroyed. It did not matter how the Pakistani flags were made, so long as they were adorned with crescent and star. So they came in all sizes, shapes and colours. Some flaunted blue fields, instead of the regulation green. Obviously they had been hastily put together with the same material that had been used for the blue Bangla Desh flag. Indeed blue Pakistani flags were more common than the green. The scene in Chandpur was repeated in Hajiganj, Mudafarganj, Kasba, Brahmanbaria; all ghost towns gay, with flags.

A 'parade' and a knowing wink

Laksham was an example of the other reaction: cringing. When I drove into the town the morning after it had been cleared of the rebels, all I could see was the army and literally thousands of Pakistani flags. The major in charge there had camped in the police station, and it was there that Major Rathore took us. My colleague a Pakistani TV Cameraman, to make a propaganda film about the "return to normalcy" in Laksham—one of the endless series broadcast daily showing welcome parades and "peace meetings."

I wondered how he could manage it, but the Major said it would be no sweat. "There are enough of these bastards left to put on a good show. Give me 20 minutes."

Lieutenant Javed of the 39th Baluch was assigned the task of rounding up a crowd. He called out to an elderly bearded man who had apparently been brought in for questioning. The man, who later gave his name as Moulana Said Mohammad Saidul Huq, insisted he was a "staunch Muslim Leaguer and not from the Awami League." (The Muslim League led the movement for an independent Pakistan in 1947.) He was all too eager to please. "I will very definitely get you at least 60 men in 20 minutes," he told Javed, "But if you give me two hours I will bring 200."

Moulana Saidul Huq was as good as his word. We had hardly drunk our fill of the deliciously refreshing coconut milk that had been thoughtfully supplied by the Major when he heard shouts in the distance. "Pakistan Zindabad!" "Pakistan army zindabad!" "Muslim League zindabad!"-they

were chanting. (Zindabad is Urdu for "Long live!") Moments later they marched into view, a motley crowd of about 50 old and decrepit men and knee-high children, all waving Pakistani flags and shouting at the top of their voices. Lt. Javed gave me a knowing wink.

Within minutes the "parade" had grown into a "public meeting" complete with a make-shift public address system and a rapidly multiplying group of would-be speakers.

Mr. Mahbub-ur-Rahman was pushed forward to make the address of welcome to the army. He introduced himself as "N.F. College professor of English and Arabic, who had also tried for History and is a life-time member of the great Muslim League Party."

Introduction over, Mahbub-ur-Rahman gave forth with gusto. "Punjabis and Bengalis," he said, "had united for Pakistan and we had our own traditions and culture. But we were terrorised by the Hindus and the Awami Leaguers and led astray. Now we thank God that the Punjabi soldiers have saved us. They are the best soldiers in the world and heroes of humanity. We love and respect them from the bottom of our hearts." And so on, interminably, in the same vein.

After the "meeting" I asked the Major what he thought about the speech. "Serves the purpose," he said, "but I don't trust that bastard. I'll put him on my list."

THE AGONY of East Bengal is not over. Perhaps the worst is yet to come. The army is determined to go on until the "clean-up" is complete. So far the job is only half done. Two divisions of the Pakistan Army, the 9th and the 16th, were flown out from West Pakistan to "sort out" the Bengali rebels and the Hindus. This was a considerable logistical feat for a country of Pakistan's resources. More than 25,000 men were moved from the west to the east. On March 28 the two divisions were given 48 hours notice to move. They were brought by train to Karachi from Kharian and Multan. Carrying only light bed rolls and battle packs (their equipment was to follow by sea) the troops were flown out to Dacca by PIA, the national airline. Its fleet of seven Boeings was taken off international and domestic routes and flew the long haul via Ceylon continuously for 14 days. A few Air Force transport aircraft helped.

The troops went into action immediately with equipment borrowed from the 14th Division which till then constituted the Eastern Command. The 9th Division, operating from Comilla, was ordered to seal the border in the east against the movement of rebels and their supplies. The 16th Division, with headquarters at Jessore, had a similar task in the Western sector of the province. They completed these assignments by the third week of May. With the rebels—those who have not been able to escape to India—boxed in a ring of steel and fire, the two army divisions are beginning to converge in a relentless comb-out operation. This will undoubtedly mean that the terror experienced in the border areas will now spread to the middle. It could also be more painful. The human targets will have nowhere to run to.

On April 20 Lt.-Col. Baig, the flower-loving G-1 of the 9th Division, thought that the comb-out would take two months, to the middle of June. But this planning seems to have misfired. The rebel forces, using guerrilla tactics, have not been subdued as easily as the army expected. Isolated and apparently unco-ordinated, the rebels have nonetheless bogged down the Pakistan Army in many places by the systematic destruction of roads and railways, without which the army cannot move. The 9th Division for one was hopelessly behind schedule. Now the monsoon threatens to shut down the military operation with three months of cloudbursts.

For the rainy season, the Pakistan Government obtained from China in the second week of May nine shallow-draught river gunboats. More are to come. These 80 ton gunboats with massive firepower will take over some of the responsibilities hitherto allotted to the air force and artillery, which will not be as effective when it rains. They will be supported by several hundred country-craft which have been requisitioned and converted for military use by the addition of outboard motors. The army intends to take to the water in pursuit of the rebels.

Colonisation of East Bengal

There is also the clear prospect of famine, because of the breakdown of the distribution system. Seventeen of the 23 districts of East Pakistan are normally short of food and have

to be supplied by massive imports of rice and wheat. This will not be possible this year because of the civil war. Six major bridges and thousands of smaller ones have been destroyed, making the roads impassible in many places. The railway system has been similarly disrupted, though the government claims it is "almost normal."

The road and rail tracks between the port of Chittagong and the north have been completely disrupted by the rebels who held Feni, a key road and rail junction, until May 7. Food stocks cannot move because of this devastation. In normal times only 15 per cent of food movements from Chittagong to upcountry areas were made by boat. The remaining 85 per cent was moved by road and rail. Even a 100 per cent increase in the effectiveness of river movement will leave 70 per cent of the food stocks in the warehouses of Chittagong.

Two other factors must be added. One is large-scale hoarding of grain by people who have begun to anticipate the famine. This makes a tight position infinitely more difficult. The other is the government of Pakistan's refusal to acknowledge the danger of famine publicly. Lt.-Gen. Tikka Khan, the military governor of East Bengal, acknowledged in a radio broadcast on April 18 that he was gravely concerned about food supplies. Since then the entire government machinery has been used to suppress the fact of the food shortage. The reason is that a famine, like the cyclone before it, could result in a massive outpouring of foreign aid —and with it the prospect of external inspection of distribution methods. That would make it impossible to conceal from the world the scale of the pogrom. So the hungry will be left to die until the clean-up is complete.

Discussing the problem in his plush air-conditioned office in Karachi recently the chairman of the Agricultural Development Bank, Mr. Qarni, said bluntly: "The famine is the result of their acts of sabotage. So let them die. Perhaps then the Bengali will come to their senses."

THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT'S East Bengal policy is so apparently contradictory and self-defeating that it would seem to justify the assumption that the men who rule Pakistan cannot make up their minds. Having committed the initial error by resorting to force, the Government, on this view, is stubbornly and stupidly mudding through.

There is, superficially, logic in this reasoning.

On the one hand, it is true that there is no let up in the reign of terror. The policy of subjugation is certainly being pursued with vigour in East Bengal. This is making thousands of new enemies for the Government every day and making only more definitive the separation of the two wings of Pakistan.

On the other hand, no government could be unaware that this policy must fail. (There are just not enough West Pakistanis to hold down the much greater numbers in East Bengal indefinitely.) For hard administrative and economic reason, and because of the crucial consideration of external development assistance, especially from America, it will be necessary to achieve a political settlement as quickly as possible. President Yahya Khan's Press conference on May 25 suggests that he acknowledges the force of these factors : And he said he would announce his plan for representative government in the middle of June.

All this would seem to indicate that Pakistan's military Government is moving paradoxically, in opposite directions, to compound the gravest crisis in the country's 24 years history.

This is a widely held view. It sounds logical. But is it true ?

My own view is that it is not. It has been my unhappy privilege to have had the opportunity to observe at first hand both what Pakistan's leaders say in the West, and what they are doing in the East.

I think that in reality there is no contradiction in the Government's East Bengal policy. East Bengal is being colonised.

This is not an arbitrary opinion of mine. The facts speak for themselves.

The first consideration of the army has been and still is the obliteration of every trace of separatism in East Bengal. This proposition is upheld by the continuing slaughter and by everything else that the government has done in both East and West Pakistan since March 25. The decision was coldly taken by the military leaders, and they are going through with it—all too coldly.

No meaningful or viable political solution is possible in East Bengal while the pogrom continues.

The crucial question is: will the killing stop?

I was given the army's answer by Major-General Shaukat Raza, commanding officer of the 9th Division, during our first meeting at Comilla on April 16.

"You must be absolutely sure," he said, "that we have not undertaken such a drastic and expensive operation—expensive both in men and money—for nothing. We've undertaken a job. We are going to finish it, not hand it over half done to the politicians so that they can mess it up again. The army can't keep coming back like this every three or four years. It has a more important task. I assure you that when we have got through with what we are doing there will never be need again for such an operation."

Major-General Shaukat Raza is one of the three divisional commanders in the field. He is in a key position. He is not given to talking through his hat.

Significantly, General Shaukat Raza's ideas were echoed by every military officer I talked to during my 10 days in East Bengal. And President Yahya Khan knows that the men who lead the troops on the ground are the de facto arbiters of Pakistan's destiny.

The single-mindedness of the army is underscored by the military operation itself. By any standard, it is a major venture. It is not something that can be switched on and off without the most grave consequences.

Army committed to remain

The army has already taken a terrible toll in dead and injured. It was privately said in Dacca that more officers have been killed than men and that the casualty list in East Bengal already exceeds the losses in the India-Pakistan war of September, 1965. The army will certainly not write off these "sacrifices" for illusory political considerations that have proved to be so worthless in the past.

Military—and it is soldiers who will be taking the decision—to call a halt to the operation at this stage would be indefensible. It would only mean more trouble with the

Bengali rebels. Implacable hatred has been displayed on both sides.

There can be no truce or negotiated settlement ; only total victory or total defeat. Time is on the side of the Pakistan Army, not of the isolated, unco-ordinated and ill-equipped rebel groups. Other circumstances, such as an expanded conflict which takes in other Powers, could of course alter the picture. But as it stands today the Pakistan Army has no reason to doubt that it will eventually achieve its objective. That is why the casualties are stolidly accepted.

The enormous financial outlay already made on the East Bengal operation and its continuing heavy cost also testify to the Government's determination. The reckless manner in which funds have been poured out makes clear that the military hierarchy, having taken a calculated decision to use force, has accepted the financial outlay as a necessary investment. It was not for nothing that 25,000 soldiers were airlifted to East Bengal, a daring and expensive exercise. These two divisons, the 9th and the 16th, constituted the military reserve in West Pakistan. They have now been replaced there by expensive new recruitment.

The Chinese have helped with equipment, which is pouring down the Karakorum highway. There is some evidence that the flood is slowing down : perhaps the Chinese are having second thoughts about their commitments to the military rulers of Pakistan. But the Pakistan government has not hesitated to pay cash from the bottom of the foreign exchange barrel for more than $1-million-worth of ammunition to European arms suppliers.

Conversations with senior military officers in Dacca, Rawalpindi and Karachi confirm that they see the solution to this problem in the speedy completion of the East Bengal operation, not in terms of a pull-out. The money required for that purpose now takes precedence over all other government expenditure. Development has virtually come to a halt.

In one sentence, the government is too far committed militarily to abandon the East Bengal operation, which it would have to do if it sincerely wanted a political solution. President Yahya Khan is riding on the back of a tiger. But he took a calculated decision to climb up there.

SO THE ARMY is not going to pull out. The Government's policy for East Bengal was spelled out to me in the Eastern Command headquarters at Dacca. It has three elements :—

(1) The Bengalis have proved themselves "unreliable" and must be ruled by West Pakistanis ;

(2) The Bengalis will have to be re-educated along proper Islamic lines. The "Islamisation of the masses"—this is the official jargon—is intended to eliminate secessionist tendencies and provide a strong religious bond with West Pakistan :

(3) When the Hindus have been eliminated by death and flight, their property will be used as a golden carrot to win over the under-privileged Muslim middleclass. This will provide the base for erecting administrative and political structures in the future.

This policy is being pursued with the utmost blatancy.

Because of the mutiny, it has been officially decreed that there will not for the present be any further recruitment of Bengalis in the defence forces. Senior Air Force and Navy officers, who were not in anyway involved, have been moved "as a precaution" to non-sensitive positions. Bengali fighter pilots, among them some of the aces of the Air Force, had the humiliation of being grounded and moved to non-flying duties. Even PIA air crews operating between the two wings of the country have been strained clean of Bengalis.

The East Pakistan Rifles, once almost exclusively a Bengali paramilitary force, has ceased to exist since the mutiny. A new force the Civil Defence Force, has been raised by recruiting Biharis and volunteers from West Pakistan. Biharis, instead of Bengalis are also being used as the basic material for the police. They are supervised by officers sent out from West Pakistan and by secondment from the army. The new Superintendent of Police at Chandpur at the end of April was a Military Police major.

Hundreds of West Pakistani government civil servants, doctors, and technicians for the radio, TV, telegraph and telephone services have already been sent out to East Pakistan. More are being encouraged to go with the promise of one and two-step promotions. But the transfer, when made, is obligatory. President Yahya recently issued an order

making it possible to transfer civil servants to any part of Pakistan against their will.

The universities 'sorted out'

I was told that all the Commissioners of East Bengal and the district Deputy Commissioner will in future be either Biharis or civil officers from West Pakistan. The Deputy Commissioners of the districts were said to be too closely involved with the Awami League secessionist movement. In some cases, such as that of the Deputy Commissioner of Comilla, they were caught and shot. That particular officer had incurred the wrath of the army on March 20 when he refused to requisition petrol and food supplies "without a letter from Sheikh Mujibur Rahman."

The Government has also come down hard on the universities and colleges of East Bengal. They were considered the hot beds of conspiracy and they are being "sorted out." Many professors have fled. Some have been shot. They will be replaced by fresh recruitment from West Pakistan.

Bengali officers are also being weeded out of sensitive positions in the Civil and Foreign Services. All are currently being subjected to the most exhaustive screening.

This colonisation process quite obviously does not work even half as efficiently as the administration wishes. I was given vivid evidence of this by Major Agha, martial law administrator of Comilla. He had been having a problem getting the local Bengali executive engineers to go out and repair the bridges and roads that had been destroyed or damaged by the rebels. This task kept getting snarled in red tape, and the bridges remained unrepaired. Agha, of course, knew the reason. "You can't expect them to work," he told me, "when you have been killing them and destroying their country. That at least is their point of view, and we are paying for it."

CAPTAIN DURRANI, of the Baluch Regiment, who was in charge of the company guarding the Comilla airport, had his own methods of dealing with the problem. "I have told them," he said with reference to the Bengalis maintaining the control tower, "that I will shoot anyone who even looks

like he is doing something suspicious." Durrani had made good his word. A Bengali who had approached the airport a few nights earlier was shot. "Could have been a rebel," I was told. Durrani had another claim to fame. He had personally accounted for "more than 60 men" while clearing the villages surrounding the airport.

The harsh reality of colonisation in the East is being concealed by shameless window dressing. For several weeks President Yahya Khan and Lt.-Gen. Tikka Khan have been trying to get political support in East Pakistan for what they are doing. The results have not exactly been satisfying. The support forthcoming so far has been from people like Moulvi Farid Ahmad, a Bengali lawyer in Dacca, Fazlul Quadeer Chaudhury and Professor Ghulam Azam of the Jamat Islami, all of whom were soundly beaten in the General Elections last December.

The only prominent personality to emerge for this purpose has been Mr. Nurul Amin, an old Muslim Leaguer and former Chief Minister of the Province who was one of only two non-Awami Leaguers to be elected to the National Assembly. He is now in his seventies. But even Nurul Amin has been careful not to be too effusive. His two public statements to date have been concerned only with the "Indian interference."

Bengalis look with scorn on the few who "collaborate." Farid Ahmad and Fazlul Quadeer Chaudhury are painfully aware of this. Farid Ahmad makes a point of keeping his windows shuttered and only those who have been scrutinised and recognised through a peephole in the front door are allowed into the house.

By singularly blunt methods the Government has been able to get a grudging acquiescence from 31 Awami Leaguers who had been elected to the national and provincial assemblies. They are being kept on ice in Dacca, secluded from all but their immediate families, for the big occasion when "representative government" is to be installed. But clearly they now represent no one but themselves.

ABDUL BARI the tailor who was lucky to survive, is 24 years old. That is the same age as Pakistan. The army can of course hold the country together by force. But the meaning of what it has done in East Bengal is that the dream

of the men who hoped in 1947 that they were founding a Muslim nation in two equal parts has now faded. There is now little chance for a long time to come that Punjabis in the West and Bengalis in the East will feel themselves equal fellow-citizens of one nation. For the Bengalis, the future is now bleak: the unhappy submission of a colony to its conquerors.

THE SPECTATOR June 19, 1971.
ANOTHER FINAL SOLUTION

There is no reason now to refrain from declaring on evidence which is brave and strong that the Government and the Army of Pakistan which is to say the establishment of West Pakistan, is and has been, for some weeks, engaged upon the most extensive and barbarous exercise of genocide that the world has known since the end of the Second World War. American atrocities in Vietnam and Vietnamese atrocities in Vietnam, are on an altogether slighter scale. White Rhodesian repression of black Rhodesians, Boer oppression of black South Africans, Russians tyranny over Russians and over Jews, Israeli violence against Arabs and the Israeli-Arab creation of million Arab refugees, Chinese fratricide of Chinese in the name of communist and subsequently of Maoist and cultural revolution, Haiti's dictatorship and all the bloody corruptions of South America ; each of these, and all of them put together, may well in the upshot rank as less than the evil that the West Pakistani establishment of the Commonwealth of Pakistan has been, and is, visiting upon the Hindus of East Pakistan. It is almost impossible to imagine the terror and the bloodshed capable of creating what seem to be something like five or so million terrified, penniless and diseased refugees in the course of five or six weeks.

The imaginative effort should be made. It is the fact that yellow refugees and the tyranny of yellow against yellow, arouse far less horror in the civilised world of West European Culture than do Jewish refugees and the tyranny of German against Jew, or the tyranny of white against black

or indeed the tyranny of black against black. When Asians slaughter each other and turn their compatriots by the million into refugees, the usual cultured and civilised West European response is a shrug and a joke. If what is happening now in East Pakistan were happening anywhere in the world outside Asia not only the demonstrations but the governments of the rest of the world would, literally, be up in arms to prevent it. We, in this country, like to think that among the reasons why we fought the Germans in the last war was to rid the world of the evil of Hitler and his gang and their genocidal, 'final solution.' It is easier to imagine Germany's gas chambers than Pakistani's choleraic slaughter in the Bengal Plain, but it remains the case and it ought to be declared that the Pakistani crime now matches the Hitlerian in dimension and horror and threatens monstrously to exceed it. Difficult and unpleasant though it may be, each one of us ought to endeavour to the best of his ability to imagine the enormity of the Pakistani crime.

It is not likely that a general declaration of war upon West Pakistan would lessen the bloodshed, otherwise such might be the proper course to advocate. It is, or should be quite clear, however, that every course short of war ought now to be taken against the Commonwealth Republic of Pakistan in order not to bring it to its senses (for it, like Hitler's Germany, has lost all human sense) but, to bring it to its knees. Charity, although helpful, is far from being enough. Pakistan under its present rule is not fit to be a member of the Commonwealth. It is not even fit to be a member of the United Nations. It is not fit to receive aid of any kind whatever. It is not a fit state with which to exchange Embassies or High Commissions. West Pakistan is not fit to rule East Pakistan. The eventual independence of East Pakistan ought clearly to be recognised by the World at large, preferably at the instance of this country, unless very swiftly indeed the present militaristic and oppressive and genocidal regime is utterly removed from power. Because this country, among others, found reason to be loth to damn the Germany of Hitler, six million Jews met their final solution in the gas chambers. While we twiddle our thumbs, the Hindus of East Pakistan now meet their equally terrible and final solution.

THE SUNDAY TIMES 20th June, 1971

**Teachers, Writers, Journalists eliminated*
**Magistrates shot,*
**Doctors disappear*
**Gestapo-like raids, rape, extortion.*

POGROM IN PAKISTAN

LAST WEEK the Sunday Times published a first-hand report by Anthony Mascarenhas about the excess of the Pakistan Army in East Pakistan. Now we have had news—more up to date and detailed and perhaps even more horrifying of what is happening in East Pakistan. This is not by Anthony Mascarenhas, but it comes to us from academic and professional sources we know to be unimpeachable.

A NEW campaign of terror has begun in East Pakistan. Its aim is to eliminate any possibility of another secessionist uprising or political challenge to the unity of the state.

The Military government in Dacca has ordered a two-pronged follow-up to its defeat of the Bangla Desh forces in the field. First, all public servants, teachers, writers, journalists and industrialists are being screened.

Second, anyone considered potentially dangerous is being "eliminated". Army intelligence has already begun arresting and interrogating teachers, journalists and other influential Bengalis. A list of suspects, thought to be either suporters or sympathisers of the secessionist Awami League has been prepared.

They are being classified in three categories—white, grey and black. The white will be given clearance. The grey will lose their jobs and may be imprisoned. The black will be shot.

Action against the Civil Service has already begun and 36 Bengali District Magistrates and sub-divisional officers have either been killed or have fled to the other side.

When army units entered the towns of Comilla, Rangpur, Kushtia, Noakhali, Faridpur and Serajganj. The local magistrates and the police superintendents were shot out of hand.

Civil servants on the grey list have been transferred to West Pakistan. They include Taslim Ahmed, Inspector-General of Police. When the army struck Dacca on the night of 25th March, the police revolted and fought for 18 hours.

A new element in the regime of terror is the Gestapo-style pick-up. Some of those wanted for questioning are arrested openly. Others are called to the army cantonment for interrogation. Most of them do not return. Those who do are often picked up again by secret agent known as RAZAKARS, a term used by the volunteers of the Nizam of Hyderabad who resisted the Indian takeover of the State in 1948. Razakars literally means duty to the King or State.

By night and day parts of Dacca are sealed off by troops searching for Hindus, Awami Leaguers and students. Everyone must carry an identity card. Cars are stopped and searched and the entrances to the city are blocked by check-posts.

If the jawan (infantryman) at the post finds anyone without an identity card and is in no mood to listen, a trip to the cantonment may follow.

Dacca is frequently shaken by bomb blasts after which security is tightened and areas searched for "miscreants" the army term for members of the MUKTI FOUJ. (liberation army).

Whatever the army has completed its task of clearing an area of "miscreants" it is replaced by the militia. These are tough, frontier people who are considered more ruthless and less disciplined than the regular army. They are paid three rupees (about 18p) a day and are lured to East Pakistan by the promise of booty.

The persecution of East Pakistan's Hindu minority and the surviving elements of its Bengali nationalism has a quality of casual horror about it.

Shanker, a college student of Jagannath College, escaped to a nearby village on 27th March. Two months later he returned alone to see what remained of his home at Thatari

Bazar. Two non-Bengalis, spotted him shouted "Hindu", "Hindu" and a chase developed. The boy was caught and taken in procession to the mosque where his throat was cut.

Abu Awal, the district magistrate, at Bhola, had the reputation of being a loyal government servant. He protected the non-Bengali population when the Awami League rose in revolt and prevented the Police station armoury from falling into the hands of the Mukti Fouj.

When they attacked on 1st May, he went to receive them. The Brigadier in charge of the action asked him to resume his post. He had hardly turned his back on the officers, when a sepoy shot him with a rifle.

About a dozen Bengali army officers were transferred to West Pakistan. They said goodbye to their families and reported at Dacca Airport to board a PIA flight to Karachi. Their families have not so far heard from them. When they inquired at Army headquarters they were told that they had deserted. The mutilated body of a major was delivered to his family with a letter of regret that he had committed suicide.

The whereabouts of Brig. Majumdar, one of the best known Bengali officers, is unknown. He stayed with his Punjabi colleagues when his Bengali troops revolted in Chittagong. When his family asked about him, they were told that any inquiry would invite trouble.

On the night of June 2, an army jeep entered the Dhanmondi residential area of Dacca. A government officer called Huq was dragged out of his house and taken to Kurmitola army cantonment.

His wife telephoned Shafiul Azam, civilian head of the East Pakistani government who contacted army headquarters and was told no one called Huq had been brought in.

An industrialist, Ranada Shaha, was told to arrange a gala evening for army officers at his village home in Mirzapur. He went to discuss the arrangements and did not return.

Troops surrounded the house of a civil servant called Amin. He was taken away in an army truck with his aged parents, his wife and three children. His brother was an

officer in Bengal Regiment which revolted and is now leading the Bangla Desh resistance near Comilla. The Amin family returned two days later without Mr. Amin.

A captain entered Mitford Hospital in Dacca with two soldiers on 15th May, went to Ward Two and led away Dr. Rahman and another of his colleagues. They were told they were needed to work in Mymensingh. Their whereabouts are now unknown.

Other troops went to American-run Holy Family Hospital but there were no surgeons, there. The hospital is now considering closing down because many of its doctors have fled including the renowned child specialist, Dr. M. N. Huq.

At Sylhet, all doctors except Surgeon-General Dr. Shamsuddin, fled across the border when the army entered the town. A major found Dr. Shamsuddin in the hospital theatre and shot him point blank.

Most of the senior Bengali officers of the PIA are missing after being picked up, including Mr. Fazlul Huq, Deputy Managing Director for East Pakistan and Captain Sekander Ali, chief sector pilot. Since the military takeover the airline has dismissed about 2,000 Bengalis.

Razakars have seized the two children of Major Khaled Mosharraf of the Bengal Regiment who deserted to the Mukti Fouj. The children aged six and four were first taken as hostages by the army. Their mother escaped to India. The children were released but then retaken.

Relatives of missing persons believe that the Razakars are junior army officers working independently in league with non-Bengalis. Some families have received ransom demands and one case is known of the money being paid without success.

The Razakars have now extended their operations from murder and extortion to prostitution. In Agrabad in Chittagong, they run a camp of young girls who, are allocated nightly to senior officials. They have also kidnapped girls for their parties. Some have not returned. Ferdausi, the leading Bengali singer, narrowly escaped a similar fate when army officers entered her home. Her mother telephoned a general whom she knew and military police were sent to her rescue.

A recent development is the return to duty, under duress, of a number of Intelligence Department official who went absent in March in response to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's call for non-cooperation with the federal government.

They are now obliged to submit the names of "undesirable persons" to the army, which is taking care not to pick up the wrong people as it did on the nights of 25th and 26th March.

On those two nights, the army killed more than 20 University professors. Of these, Dr. Moniruzzaman of the Physics department was shot dead instead of his namesake in the Bengali Department, Mr. Monaim of the English Department was similarly killed instead of Mr. Munir, also of the Bengali Department.

Some University teachers reported for duty on 1st June at the instigation of General Tikka Khan, the Martial Law Administrator, but some of them have since fallen into the hands of the RAZAKARS.

The activities of RAZAKARS are known, if not overtly approved, by the military administration. Occasionally, they are a source of concern. Recently the administration managed to induce a few hundred jute workers to resume production in Dacca. On 29th May three of their trade union leaders were taken away in an army jeep. By the following day the workers had fled.

The PROBLEMS of return for the 6 million refugees seem insuperable. In Dacca, Jessore, Rangpur, Ishurdi, Khulna and Chittagong their houses and shops have been taken over by non-Bengalis.

Backed by the army on 28th April, they cleared Mirpur and Mohammadpur, two residential districts covering 15 square miles in Dacca, of their entire Bengali population, killing everyone who had ignored an advance warning to leave.

In Jessore soldiers surrounded the house of Mr. Masihur Rahman, an Awami League member of the National Assembly, and non-Bengali civilians went in killing everyone. A 10 year old boy jumped from the first floor and was shot in mid-air by a sepoy.

Organisations caring for the refugees who came into East Pakistan at the time of Partition and the Razakar backed

'Peace Committee' are publishing press notices inviting applications for "allotment" of shops and houses left by Bengalis.

In Chittagong locked shops and houses in Laldighi and Reazuddin Bazar were broken open by the army and handed over to non-Bengalis. Nearly all sequestered property now has signboards and name-plates in Urdu, the language of West Pakistan.

In the villages the houses have been distributed among members of the right wing Jamat-e-Islam and Muslim League which were humiliated in the last election by the Awami League.

All Hindu bank accounts have also been frozen, together with those of suspected Awami League supporters. The manager of the British National & Grindlays Bank in Dacca was the only banker to have queried the directive.

Bengalis have also been forbidden to approach major railway, port and dock installations. When 5,000 labourers returned to work in Chittagong docks on 1st May, they were driven away. The installations are now run by military, naval and non-Bengali personnel.

Senior railway officers in Chittagong were shot and the workers colony burnt down. In Dacca, Ishurdi and Syedpur no Bengali dares approach a railway junction.

At Dacca and Chittagong airports, 250 porters were flown in from West Pakistan to replace the Bengalis.

Three thousand Punjabi police now patrol Dacca while Khyber Rifles from the North-West Frontier and Rangers from the West Pakistan border, man police stations outside.

Most of the 10,000 militiamen in East Pakistan Rifles who revolted in March have either crossed the border or are hiding in the villages. Those who responded to an amnesty call surrendered in Dacca on 15th May, they were seen being driven away in open trucks blindfolded with their hands tied behind their backs.

A few days later hundreds of naked corpses were found in the river Buriganga and Sitalakhya.

The East Pakistan Rifles have now been renamed the Pakistan Defence Force and hundreds of Biharis have been recruited. They are now being trained with rifles and machine-guns at Peelkhana.

On 28th May, in the Khilgaon district of Dacca, 100 suspects were picked up after a bomb damaged a non-Bengali shop.

At Motijheel, a non-Bengali demanded 10,000 rupees (about £ 600) from his neighbour, threatening to hand him over to the army if the money was not paid within 24 hours.

A radio and camera retailer in Stadium Market, Dacca found his stock missing on the 12th May, and reported the incident to the Martial Law Headquarters. That night during curfew, the shop was set on fire.

Begum Majeda, a housewife, was fetching water from a street tap. Two Punjabi policemen tried to lift her on to a truck. She screamed and the Punjabis were beaten off with sticks and stones. That night whole of the Bashabo area was set on fire.

It is now considered unsafe to wear wristwatches on the streets in Dacca and transistor radios and television sets are kept hidden at home. Soldiers sell looted transistors, TV sets and wristwatches at between £ 3 and £ 6 each on the streets.

One officer Colonel Abdul Bari, has deposited one crore of rupees—the equivalent of £ 833,000—at the State Bank of Pakistan.

Efforts are now being made to clean the cities up, just before the sponsored visit to Dacca of a small party of foreign journalists in May. The bodies of students were removed from Jagannath Hall and Iqbal Hall in the University Campus and debris was cleared away from the shelled areas of Shakharipatti, Tantibazar, Shantinagar and Rajarbagh.

Schools and colleges have reopened but there are few students. One school with 800 students before the fighting reopened with only ten.

Most young people between the ages of 16 and 26 have crossed the border to join the MUKTI FOUJ training camps.

Their widespread fear is that to be young in East Pakistan is to be killed. They nurture the hope also that they may one day live in a free **BANGLA DESH.**

TIME Magazine, June 21, 1971

THE BENGALI REFUGEES : A Surfeit of Woe.

A cyclone that killed as many as 500,000 people. A civil war that claimed perhaps 200,000 more. An exodus that already totals 5,000,000 and is still growing. A cholera epidemic that has barely begun, yet has taken already some 5,000 lives. It is an almost biblical catalogue of woe, rivalling if not surpassing the plagues that visited upon the Egyptians of Mosaic days. As yet it is virtually certain that the list will grow even longer for the bedevilled people of East Pakistan. Last week, as fresh waves of refugees poured across the Indian border at the rate of 100,000 a day, they brought tales of a pogrom against Hindus by the predominantly Moslem Pakistan. And over the stinking, teeming refugee camps that scar the border areas of five Indian states hovered the growing threat of famine and pestilence.

The first onrush of refugees followed the outburst of civil war in March, when West Pakistan decided to crush East Pakistanis drive for Bangla Desh (an independent Bengali State). Immediately after fighting broke out between the fierce Pathans and Punjabis of the Pakistani army and the Bengali liberation forces, 1,500,000 terrified East Pakistanis—Moslems and Hindus alike—crossed into the Indian states of West Bengal, Tripura, Assam, Meghalaya and Bihar. Now the escapees are mostly Hindus, and they bring tales of torture, rape and massacre. According to the new arrivals, the Pakistani Government is blaming the 10 million Hindus of East Pakistan (pop. 78 million) for being the principal supporters of the now outlawed Awami League of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The Hindus did, in fact, overwhelmingly support **"MUJIB"**, who at last word was under house arrest in Karachi, the principal city of West Pakistan. But so did the Moslems, for the Awami League won 167 out of 169 seats at stake in East Pakistan during last December elections. But the Hindus, because they are minority, are an easier target.

Battered To Death

A Hindu building contractor told of how Pakistani troops at a tea estate asked people whom they voted for in the election. They shot 200 who admitted voting for the Awami League. In a hospital in Agartala, Indian doctors reported that number of the refugees came in badly burnt. The doctors explained that the refugees were shoved into huts by Pak. Armymen, who then set the huts on fire. The hospital has also treated 370 men, women and children for bullet wounds 17 of whom died.

In the refugee camp at Petrapole on the West Bengal—East Pakistan border a 16 year old girl recalled how she and her parents were in bed, "when we heard the tread of feet outside. The door burst open and several soldiers entered. They pointed their bayonets at the three of us and before my eyes killed my mother and father—battering to death with the butts of their rifles. They flung me on the floor and the three of them raped me." Another teenage girl in a Tripura camp told how she was raped by thirteen West Pakistani soldiers before escaping. Other girls have reportedly taken from fleeing families to be sold as prostitutes to the soldiers particularly if their fathers could not pay a ransom for them.

According to an official who has toured the border, Pakistani troops and their anti-Hindu supporters are demanding $ 140 a person before letting family members leave East Pakistan. Lacking only $ 25 of the ransom for his wife one man pleaded : "beat me for the rest." They let his wife go after he was beaten on the temple with a bamboo stick until he lost an eye.

Those who escaped could be models for Goya's 'Disaster of War'. The lucky ones get into already over-filled tent camps that reek of caustic soda disinfectant, and human excretion and are ankle deep in filthy water from the first monsoons. Most huddle under trees or bushes trying to avoid the heavy rains. Some find cramped quarters on the verandas of now closed school houses. Others near Calcutta have found large open drainpipes to live in. Around them is always the stench of garbage, polluted water, sickness and death.

Token Cremation

The polluted drinking water, the lack of sanitation and the officials' inability to inoculate the millions of refugees

have contributed to the spread of cholera particularly in West Bengal. A bacterial disease, common to India and Pakistan, cholera causes severe vomitting and diarrhoea, which bring dehydration and death. Those afflicted can usually be saved by replenishing the body fluids by intravenous injections or drinking large doses of a solution of salts, baking soda and glucose. But the flood of refugees is just too great to be handled by beleaguered, medical teams.

The roads the refugees travel are not only littered with clothes and discarded household goods but with bodies of cholera victims left by those too frightened of the disease to bury their own dead. Although Hindus practice cremation, many of the bodies were merely singed with two burning sticks and then left for the hovering vultures or wild dogs to pick apart. Even when the corpses are buried they are often dug up by carrion eaters. Police have their hands full trying to prevent refugees from tossing corpses into the rivers. In the overcrowded hospitals the sick and dying are jammed together on the floor, and the dead continue to lie among the living for hours before the overworked, hospital staffs can cart the bodies off.

At one of West Bengal's overflowing health centres a 45 year old rice farmer watched his infant son continue to suckle after his mother had died of cholera. "My wife is dead" the man said numbly. "Three of my children are dead. What else can happen ?" With the refugees spreading through the Indian states, carrying the disease with them, the epidemic could rapidly afflict hundreds of thousands of Indians. For this reason Indian authorities are trying to prevent the East Pakistanis from entering Calcutta, where uncounted millions already live on the streets in squalid conditions that guarantee an annual cholera epidemic there.

Unbalanced Exchange

While India has temporarily accepted the refugees and is doing its best to help them, the Government of Indira Gandhi sees only economic and political disaster in the massive influx of impoverished people. The refugee problem has chronically troubled India since the August 1947 partition of the sub-continent into India and Pakistan. In Northern India

there was fairly balanced exchange, with 6,000,000 Moslems fleeing to Pakistan and 6,500,000 Hindus and Sikhs entering India. But since partition, 4,300,000 Hindus from East Pakistan have fled to India, for the most part into West Bengal. There has been no comparable flight of Moslems. This imbalance has created the social, political and economic problems that have plagued the state of West Bengal and turned its capital, Calcutta, into a sink-hole of human misery.

The cost of feeding and attempting to house the refugees is currently $ 1,330,000 a day—an expense that Mrs. Gandhi's government can ill afford if it is going to fulfil the campaign promise of 'garibi hatao' (eradicate poverty) made last March. The food required by the refugees is rapidly depleting existing food stockpiles and threatens to create a famine for the Indian themselves. The refugees are also taking work away from the Indians; in West Bengal the refugee peasants are hiring out as agricultural labourer for a quarter of the wages local labourer is paid.

No Room

Faced with these problems, the Indian government calls the refugees "evacuees" or "escapees" and hopes for their return to their homeland. "Being poor country ourselves" Mrs. Gandhi told refugees at a camp in eastern India, "we cannot afford to keep you here forever, even if we wished to do so." Their return to their homeland is not likely in the foreseeable future, with the pogroms under way in East Pakistan and the probability of a protracted guerrilla war there. Moreover, because of the war and the exodus, the planting of crops in East Pakistan was at a disasterously low level before the rains began. Famine is almost certain to strike, and when it does, millions more will pack their belongings and seek refuge in a country that has no room for them.

THE ECONOMIST, June 26, 1971

A GENERAL'S FIRST DUTY IS TO CONTROL HIS MEN

The western aid donors to Pakistan are getting tougher. The World Bank's aid to Pakistan consortium (which comprises ten western countries and Japan) decided on Monday to postpone any discussion of fresh aid to Pakistan until it sees what kind of political settlement President Yahya is prepared to offer in the announcement he is due to make on June 28. Even then, the consortium will probably wait to see whether President Yahya can actually persuade a reasonable proportion of the 6 million or so refugees in India to return to their homes.

The donor countries are treating India rather differently. They pledged £ 540 million (£ 270 million in project aid and £ 270 million in general assistance) to India last week—compared with £ 360 million last year. And the postponement of further aid comes at an embarrassing time for Pakistan. Exactly how badly the Pakistani economy has been hit by the civil war will be spelled out in Saturday's budget, which is expected to reveal a huge balance-of-payments deficit and to raise taxes and cut imports.

But President Yahya seems to have found friends in the deputation of three British Members of Parliament who visited Pakistan last week. They have said that they believe in his sincerity in seeking a political settlement. But the big question—what basis there is for a political settlement in East Pakistan—remains unanswered. The stories of pogroms against Hindus and the slaughter of educated Bengalis are still coming out of the province. Some of these refer to the situation in April and May, and the British delegation claims that the situation is much better now.

But one of the British visitors, Mrs. Jill Knight, painted so implausibly rosy a picture as to throw doubt on her own testimony. "I found no evidence of army massacres during an extensive tour of East Pakistan," she wrote in one British newspaper. Another member of the delegation, Mr. James Tinn, flatly disagrees with this testimony. Mrs. Knight also made an extraordinary statement in which she said that "we heard a rumour of army killing at Bhola and asked to go

there. At once arrangements were made but we decided subsequently not to go because the rumours were not, we thought, sufficiently authenticated." Such rumours, can hardly be discarded without personal inspection.

But there is some evidence that the Pakistan government is at last taking action to discipline the army. Mr. Tinn said he heard in Dacca that two army officers had been sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for rape and other crimes and that ten other cases were pending. Last week General Yahya urged members of "the minority community", the Hindus, to return to their homes and described them as "equal citizens of Pakistan." But it is clear that it will have to be proved to them that they have nothing to fear by going back across the border—and that is much easier said than done.

Recent reports from Dacca suggest that, though the town is sullen but pacified, there is guerrilla activity not only on the border but also in the forests to the north of, and in the swamps to the south of Dacca. Guerrilla activity on the border will make it harder for any refugees to return home and increase the tension between regular Indian and Pakistani troops. And guerrilla activities inside the province will deter Bengalis, for fear of reprisals, from co-operating with the army or with any "transfer of power" plan of President Yahya. However, the chances for the distribution of international relief in East Pakistan are now better. For if President Yahya is prepared to allow foreign journalists to travel freely around the province, as now seems to be the case, he will presumably have no objection to U.N. people and perhaps volunteer aid-bringers doing the same. But the political issue is still there.

NEWSWEEK, June 28, 1971

THE TERRIBLE BLOOD BATH OF TIKKA KHAN

Ever since the Pakistani civil war broke out last March, President Mohammad Yahya Khan has done his utmost to prevent reports on the ruthless behaviour of the Pakistani Army in putting down the Bengali fight for independence from reaching the outside world. Most foreign journalists

have been barred from East Pakistan, and only those West Pakistani newsmen who might be expected to produce "friendly accounts" have been invited to tour East Pakistan and tell their countrymen about the rebellion. In at least one instance, however, that policy backfired. Anthony Mascarenhas, a Karachi newsman who also writes for the London Sunday Times was so horrified by the events he witnessed that he and his family fled to London to publish the full story. Last week, in the Times, Mascarenhas wrote that he was told repeatedly by Pakistani military and civil authorities in Dacca that the Government intends "to cleanse East Pakistan once and for all of the threat of secession, even if it means killing off 2 million people". And the federal army, concluded Mascarenhas, "is doing exactly that with terrifying thoroughness."

That the Pakistani army is visiting a dreadful blood bath upon the people of East Pakistan is also affirmed by newsmen and others who have witnessed the flight of a 6 million terrified refugees into neighbouring India. NEWSWEEK'S Tony Clifton recently visited India's refugee-clogged border regions and cabled the following report:

> Anyone who goes to the camps and hospitals along India's border with Pakistan comes away believing the Punjabi army capable of any atrocity. I have seen babies who have been shot, men who have had their backs whipped raw. I've seen people literally struck dumb by the horror of seeing their children murdered in front of them or their daughters dragged off into sexual slavery. I have no doubt at all that there have been a hundred **"Mylais"** and **"Lidices"** in East Pakistan—and I think, there will be more.
>
> My personal reaction is one of wonder more than anything else. I've seen too many bodies to be horrified by anything much any more. But I find myself standing still again and again, wondering how any man can work himself into such a murderous frenzy.

Slaughter

The story of one shy little girl in a torn pink dress with red and green flowers has a peculiar horror. She could not have been a danger to anyone. Yet I, met her in

a hospital at Krishnanagar, hanging nervously back among the other patients, her hand covering the livid scar on her neck where a Pakistani soldier had cut her throat with his bayonet. "I am Ismatara, the daughter of late Ishaque Ali," she told me formally. "My father was a businessman in Kushtia. About two months ago he left our house and went to his shop and I never saw him again. That same night, after I went to bed, I heard shouts and screaming, and when I went to see what was happening, the Punjabi soldiers were there. My four sisters were lying dead on the floor, and I saw that they had killed my mother. While I was there they shot my brother—he was a bachelor of science. Then a soldier saw me and stabbed me with his knife. I fell to the floor and played dead. When the soldiers left I ran, and a man picked me up on his bicycle and I was brought here."

Suddenly, as if she could no longer bear to think about her ordeal, the girl left the room. The hospital doctor was explaining to me that she was brought to the hospital literally soaked in her own blood, when she pushed her way back through the patients and stood directly in front of me. "What am I to do?" She asked. "Once I had five sisters and a brother and a father and a mother. Now I have no family. I am an orphan. Where can I go? What will happen to me?"

Victims

"You'll be all right" I said, stupidly. "You're safe here." But what will happen to her and to the thousands of boys and girls and men and women who have managed to drag themselves away from the burning villages whose flames I saw lighting up the East Pakistani sky each night? The hospital in Agartala, the capital city of Tripura, is just half a mile from the border, and it is already overcrowded with the victims of the rampaging Pakistani army. There is a boy of 4 who survived a bullet through his stomach and a woman who listlessly relates how the soldiers murdered two of her children in front of her eyes, and then shot her as she held her youngest child in her arms. "The bullets passed through the baby's buttocks and then through her left arm," Dr. R. Datta, the medical superintendent, explains. "But she regained consciousness and dragged herself and the baby to the border." Another woman, the bones in her upper leg

shattered by bullets, cradles an infant in her arms. She had given birth prematurely in a paddy field after she was shot. Yet, holding her newborn child in one hand and pulling herself along with the other, she finally reached the border. "Although I know these people, I am continually amazed at how tough they are," says Datta. Still, there are some who cannot cope. I stepped over two, small boys lying on the floor, clinging to each other like monkeys. "Refugees say their village was burnt about a week ago and everyone in it was killed except these two", the doctor says. "We have had them for three days and we don't know who they are. They are so terrified by what they saw they are unable to speak. They just lie there holding on to each other. It is almost impossible to get them apart even long enough to feed them. It is hard to say when they will regain their speech or be able to live normal lives again".

New Jersey Congressman Cornelius Gallagher, who visited the Agartala hospital, says he came to India thinking the atrocity stories were exaggerated. But when he actually saw the wounded he began to believe that, if anything, the reports had been toned down. A much-decorated officer with Patton in Europe during World War II, Gallagher told me : "In the war, I saw the worst areas of France, the killing grounds in Normandy, but I never saw anything like that. It took all of my strength to keep from breaking down and crying."

Rape

Other foreigners, too, were dubious about the atrocities at first, but the endless repetition of stories from different sources convinced them. "I am certain that troops have thrown babies into the air and caught them on their bayonets," says Briton, John Hastings, a Methodist missionary who have lived in Bengal for twenty years. "I am certain that troops have raped girls repeatedly, then killed them by pushing their bayonets up between their legs."

All this savagery suggests that the Pakistani army is either crazed by blood-lust or, more likely, is carrying out a calculated policy of terror amounting to genocide against the whole Bengali population. The architect appears to be

Lt.-Gen. Tikka Khan, the military governor of East Pakistan. Presumably, Pakistan's President knows something about what is going on, but he may not realise that babies are being burnt alive, girls sold into virtual slavery and whole families murdered. He told the military governor to put down a rebellion, and Tikka Khan has done it, efficiently and ruthlessly. As a result, East Pakistan is still a nominal part of Pakistan. But the brutality inflicted by West on East in the last three months has made it certain that it will only be a matter of time before Pakistan becomes two countries. And those two countries will be irreparably split—at least until the last of today's maimed and brutalised children grow old and die with their memories of what happened when Yahya Khan decided to preserve their country.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH, June 29, 1971

REIGN OF TERROR STILL BY ARMY IN EAST BENGAL SAYS MP

By Clare Hollinworth in Dacca

The British Parliamentary Delegation to East Bengal led by Mr. Arthur Bottomley, Labour MP for Middlesbrough East left Dacca for Calcutta yesterday in a frustrated and gloomy mood.

He had spent some hours in a vain attempt to visit Boliadi, a village 15 miles north of Dacca, which was destroyed at dawn on Sunday morning by the West Pakistan Army.

For reasons not yet explained six villages have recently been razed to the ground in this area, to the north of the small industrial town of Tongi, and firing can still be heard there.

Mr. Toby Jessel, Conservative MP for Twickenham, commenting to the British Press, said: "The reign of terror which has been imposed here is not conducive to the restoration of the economic life of the country".

Drawing on his experiences with the fact-finding mission during the past four days Mr. Jessel said the disappearance of local people and the sacking of village add to the great fear Bengalis already have of the Pakistani Army.

"Trigger-Happy"

"The generals must stop the trigger-happy and arbitrary actions of many units," he said. "I could not put my hand on my heart and recommend anyone to return to Pakistan if they were Hindu or had any connection with Awami League".

"Indeed I doubt whether it is safe for anyone to return to East Pakistan from India with the Army in its present mood."

One step towards restoring confidence might be, said Mr. Jessel, the replacement of Lt.-Gen. Tikka Khan in the post of Military Governor by a soldier who knew something of how to win the hearts and minds of Bengalis.

Mr. Jessel claimed the Pakistani authorities were trying to "have it both ways" by their emphatic statements that the Feni bridge between Dacca and Chittagong was destroyed by Indian officers coming from across the border.

At the same time they razed to the ground scores of villages near the bridge because they had harboured Bangla Desh guerrillas.

Mr. Reginald Prentice, Labour MP for East Ham North, though not so forthright, said he toured the Barisal area in the delta on Sunday last, and order was not yet restored, although he had heard an impressive weight of reports of repressive army action against nearby villages.

Mr. Bottomley told the local Press that "they had seen many terrible things." The RAF Hercules aircraft, carrying the delegation from Dacca to Calcutta was yesterday forbidden to enter Indian air space. It took a quarter of an hour of radio exchanges between the crew and ground control in Calcutta before the aircraft was allowed to land.

Death And Hatred In Chittagong

BY Our Staff Correspondent in Chittagong

The army has restored order in Chittagong, the vital port of East Pakistan. After a series of atrocities committed by both Bengalis and Bihari Moslems, the martial law authorities destroyed scores of villages by fire, artillery and bulldozers.



New recruits in a secret camp in East Pakistan: They have a cause to fight for — and "prize are no promotion"

xplained. "Only after the Pakistani army attacked the Bengali police and the East Pakistan Rifles' headquarters in Dacca and killed large numbers of people did they kill their West Pakistani officers and begin their resistance."

The camp is clean, and there is good discipline. At six in the morning the men line up and those on patrol that day are briefed — standing to attention as a sergeant reads the names and mission assigned each man. A pep talk follows, in which the men are exhorted to remember they are fighting for independence and must make great sacrifices.

Patrols leave the camp twice a day, at daybreak and dusk. Most last 12 hours, but intermittently there are forays deep into territory controlled by the Pakistani army, and these take four or five days. Each rebel unit consists of about 20 men, but it may be split into smaller groups in the field for some missions. One group will be assigned to watch for Pakistan army patrols which could threaten the camp. The main patrols seek out small army forces or single vehicles on the roads. They may plant mines, but their main tactic is the ambush.

Two former Pakistani artillerymen who have defected, Kamuj Jaman, 24, a veteran of the Indo-Pakistan war in Kashmir, and Sader Ali, 22, who had three years' army experience, estimate the men in their camp "have killed more than 200 Pakistanis in the last three months". This figure is probably inflated since most of the fighting takes place at night when it would be difficult to count the number of dead. A closer estimate would be about 50 killed — probably fewer. In Vietnam it is assumed that two men are wounded for every man killed. And it is unlikely these fighters, poorly equipped, could have put a 600-man battalion out of commission.

"We get most of our new arms and ammunition from Pakistan army dead and wounded," Kamuj Jaman said. "The Mukti Fauj area headquarters periodically sends us supplies too." There isn't a lot of ammunition in the camp, and two men with quartermaster experience keep strict account of all supplies. The munitions given to each patrol are carefully noted and have to be turned in on completion of the mission. Dr Mannan commented: "There is not enough ammunition to mount any large attacks, but for guerilla tactics it is sufficient." The patrols are lightly armed with British submachine guns, old Enfield rifles and some light machine-guns. Occasionally a group has two-inch mortars, and there are also some anti-tank bazookas that are used against bunkers.

Three men in handcuffs, alleged to be spies for the Pakistan army, were in the camp. Dr Mannan said local villagers had reported seeing them leading an army patrol through a guerilla minefield. The men had confessed to being members of the Moslem League and the Jamiat-i-Islam Party but denied they were involved in any of the killing and looting done by League people. They insisted they were farmers and had been forced by the army to show them through the mines. According to Mannan: "The men will probably not be shot but will be given a chance to prove their loyalty in battle with the Mukti Fauj." The captives said they had not been tortured, and they were being fed the same potatoes, curry and rice as the rebels.

During the night one patrol led by Kamuj Jaman made contact with some Pakistani army troops in two bunkers in a small village about half a mile from the camp. The sporadic staccato bursts of machine gun fire could be heard for about an hour. When the patrol returned the following morning, Jaman reported: "The villagers told us the Pakistanis were in some bunkers nearby. We tried to sneak up on them, but they heard something and started firing. They knew they had given away their position, so they withdrew. We fired at their noise but don't know if we hit anyone."

At present the Mukti Fauj policy is to keep up pressure on the smaller outlying army posts. As the guerillas become stronger, they will move from the jungles into the small villages and towns and, eventually, into the cities. They count on Islamabad's financial difficulties and the over-extended supply lines to bring closer the victory in which they confidently believe — if only because they are convinced that the 75 million people of East Pakistan can endure longer than the 100,000 West Pakistan troops stationed on their soil.

But, if recent estimates are correct, 25 million of their compatriots are facing starvation. A major famine is believed by two US doctors to be around the corner — a famine which, because Islamabad refuses to acknowledge the severity of the situation, little has been done to prevent. Soon, they say, it will be too late to avert the crisis. Hoarding of foodstocks is already commonplace, prices have rocketed — and the army has taken many of the emergency stores.

People asked as Biafra surrendered whether the Nigerian government genuinely wished to make strenuous efforts to save the stubborn Ibos from famine. And the outside world may wonder how blind Islamabad really is. If these people die, the Mukti Fauj loses a third of its allies. But any such calculation by Islamabad would ignore the probability that every funeral pyre will ignite the hatred of more Bengalis. The Bangla Desh leaders have said: "The time is past for any political solution . . . blood is a river that can never be bridged."

Fighters of Darkness

Matt Franjola
Calcutta

THE guerilla bands of the Mukti Fauj (freedom fighters) have become the armies of the night in East Pakistan. The army is in control of the 78 major towns and most of the larger villages, but — especially in the provinces of Tippera and Noakhali southeast of Dacca — the guerillas are getting stronger. Hit-and-run tactics and sabotage threaten the West Pakistani army's communications; in this way, the people of "Bangla Desh" hope to erode the western wing's dominion over them. The Mukti Fauj effectively control the narrow corridor between Noakhali and the port of Chittagong; and bands in Sylhet, Rangpur and Chittagong, although less strong, have harassed the army there.

Most guerilla bases are inside East Pakistan; a few groups operate from the Indian side of the border. The bases reflect their determination. "A" camp is a base for former East Pakistan Rifles militiamen, surrounded by lush green jute fields and hidden in a grove in East Pakistan. A young guard snaps to attention at the bamboo gate.

A small Bangla Desh flag hangs from the eaves of one of two long thatched huts in the camp. Inside the huts, about 250 men in sarongs sleep on woven mats laid over the hard packed earth. Near each man lies his weapon, uniform and assorted personal gear. Each hut is 80 feet long by 20 feet wide and sleeps about 60 men.

The camp motor pool also has a sentry, guarding two jeeps, one truck and two farm tractors, all of which have been taken from East Pakistan civil or military forces. Several large tents in the centre of the camp constitute the headquarters area and the officers' quarters, equipped with old tables and chairs. There is a dispensary, looked after by the camp's doctor, Abdul Mannan. "It was only after the events of March 25 that these men revolted," Dr Mannan

Bangla Desh fighters, Vietcong style: Getting stronger



Mohamed Amin

Fighters of Darkness.
Far Eastern Economic Review : 25-9-71.

Cover story of "Chitrangada" published from Mujib Nagar.

A boy tenderly feeding his dying grandma.
Photo : Kishor Parekh.



Herald Tribune : 3-5-71.



East Pakistani refugees in a camp in India.
Time :. 2-8-71.



Bengali refugees line up for food in a camp in India.
Time : 3-6-71.

The sullen hatred, fear and mistrust between the West Pakistan authorities and the local Bengali population remains open and intense.

Indeed the army here admits over one third of the working population is still hiding in the countryside, there is little traffic in the streets and many shops are shut. Although the night curfew has been relaxed there is firing throughout the night.

A Colonel explained this by saying: "Our fire power is greater than theirs. When we discover any resistance we destroy the house and the surrounding area to demonstrate to the local population what will happen to them if they harbour Bangla Desh guerrillas."

The army hope that the vital bridge at Feni, 65 miles to the north-west will be repaired by 5th July, thus enabling distribution of goods from the clogged harbour to begin. Foreign experts are sceptical for there is a great deal of work still to be done on this rail crossing, which was skilfully destroyed, either by Bangla Desh guerrillas or Indian Army sappers.

Although the martial law authorities claim there are now only 1,000 local inhabitants under detention, Bengali leaders in private claim that each night some 100 people are brought in by the army for questioning and only five or six allowed to return.

This was confirmed by foreign non-British residents who added that the inhabitants were often "threatened" by the Army and made to open shops or attend offices because they were too afraid or cowed to disobey. But after threats or interrogation the Bengalis concerned took the first possible opportunity to cross the frontier into India.

Doubtless senior officers here in the Delta are having problems with their own troops, who went on the rampage immediately after they had occupied the towns and are still not always easy to control.

British residents, to a man, are strong supporters of President Yahya Khan, and anxious that financial aid should be resumed. They are full of praise for the manner in which the Army is maintaining order, but their views are not shared by other foreign residents, nor by the Bengalis.

Yahya Plans Constitution In 4 Months

By M.F.H. BEG from Karachi.

President Yahya Khan announced yesterday that he had set up a committee to draft a constitution so that Pakistan could return to civilian rule.

In a nation-wide broadcast the President said he hoped to transfer power to elected representatives in a matter of four months or so. "The precise timing will naturally depend on the internal and external situation at the time" he said.

Various leaders of the National Assembly would be consulted in preparing the draft constitution, which would be worked out after studying a number of existing constitutions. President Yahya said: "The constitution shall also provide full social and economic justice to various sections of our society. The constitution must be a Federal one and it must have all the characteristics of a Federal Constitution.

There will not be fresh elections before the new constitution is introduced" he said.

President Yahya said he had banned the Awami League. The League won all but two of the seats in East Pakistan at the December elections.

EDITORIAL

East Pakistan's Future

President Yahya Khan's constitutional plans after the upheavals in East Pakistan are accompanied by grim reports of the situation in that crucified province. It is now several weeks since he held out the prospect of finding enough representative East Pakistanis to set up a provincial administration and co-operate somehow with West Pakistani politicians to form a civilian national Government. He must have been deplorably out of touch with what was and had been, going on, and now sets more modest and distant goals.

That he rules out fresh elections goes without saying. It is the tragedy of this well-meaning man, and a sobering reflection for the ardent reformers, that the first genuinely free elections, courageously implemented by him resulted in

bloodbath that followed. First the general breakdown of law and order. Then the mob murdering West Pakistanis. Then the civil war with Western troops proceeding with brutality, often with savagery, against independence fighters and liberal politicians alike. And fourthly the massacre of East Bengali Hindus by East Bengali Moslems, with the army tolerating, abetting or participating.

Official assurances, before the Press was allowed back into East Pakistan, that conditions were well on the way back to normal were rudely shattered last week by the first cable from Dacca. The situation in Chittagong is now shown to be rather worse. No wonder the Parliamentary delegation could not honestly encourage the six million refugees to return.

President Yahya, dropping the Constituent Assembly, has set up a committee to draft a constitution for a return to civilian rule in four months or so—but longer if the internal and external situation is not propitious. There seems little hope that either will be. He praises the Army for its suppression of the threatened secession, and while promising maximum provincial autonomy, makes it clear that central control will be much stronger than if the compromise rejected by Sheikh Mujib, the Eastern leader, who won the election and is now in prison. Evidently East Pakistan is to be treated as a kind of colony. How much self-rule it gets will depend on how it accepts its lot.

DAILY AMERICAN June 29, 1971.

PAKISTAN REPORTED ATTACKING HINDUS

By Arnold Zethlin

DACCA. June 28 (AP). The Pakistan army attacked at least five villages within 30 miles of Dacca in the past four days, killing Hindu men and burning homes and markets in pre-dawn raids, reliable sources said here, today.

The disclosure came after this correspondent arrived at one village, Boliadi, having passed an army column leaving the place and seen dead Hindu men and burning bazaar and houses. The commanding officer, who identified

himself as Maj. Omar and refused to identify his outfit, called the operation a "routine patrol."

For more than an hour this correspondent was in the village, he heard rifle fire, and saw columns of smoke coming from nearby villages which local Moslem residents said included Kaliakhair, Chapair, Kuripara, and Bhringraj, all within six mile radius of Boliadi, home of East Pakistan Moslem Chief Justice B.A. Siddiky. Residents said the raids started on Friday—the day after the arrival of a four member delegation of British parliamentarians investigating conditions in East Pakistan and India.

Boliadi residents said soldiers and men in the uniform of the frontier constabulary with the North-west Frontier in West Pakistan attacked the Hindu section of the village early yesterday morning. They said the attack, in an area which is in the Dacca district about 30 miles of an hour's drive by car from the capital Dacca, started on Friday.

The correspondent saw a Hindu woman with a vermilion spot on her brow cradling a man said to be her husband who was shot in the neck. Another sari-clad woman moaned over the body of her husband sprawled nearby. Across a small creek in a tiny corrugated iron house lay the body of a white-haired man with a bullet wound in his back. Residents said at least five or six other corpses were in the village.

Asked if he had found any "miscreants"—the usual name for Awami League dissidents by government forces, Maj. Omar said his men were only on "routine patrol." He refused to give other details.

He led about two dozen men in regular army uniforms carrying automatic rifles and ammunition boxes. Two men carried transistor portable radios and others carried goods wrapped in the cloth used for lungis, the skirtlike garment which is the traditional dress for farmers among Bengalis in East Pakistan.

A Boliadi resident said the army looted homes and markets before setting them ablaze. As they spoke, flames shot from the corrugated homes and market stalls. Heat buckled the sheets and burned the underpinnings, bringing the buildings to the ground with a crash. In one lane, a Hindu idol in bright yellow, green, and red lay smashed in three pieces.

Left were some women, some wailing in Bengali. "They have taken everything."

Moslems said about one hundred Hindu families—thought to be at least five hundred people—lived in the area. Most had fled to hide in the tall jute fields or had taken to the nearby creeks and forests for safety.

The Moslems appeared untouched and many urged this correspondent to give "wide circulation" to the story. "See the condition of our Bangla Desh" said, one English speaking student referring to the name of secessionist East Bengal. Many identified themselves as students who had fled from Dacca on 25th March, after the army cracked down against the now banned Awami League and jailed its leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

For the first time since March, this correspondent heard cries of "Shadheen Bangla"—independent Bengal—and "Joi Bangla—Long live Bengal," slogans of Sheikh Mujib's party.

Pakistan Orders Constitution

KARACHI, Pakistan, June 28, (AP), President Yahya Khan of Pakistan announced today he has ordered a "committee of experts" to prepare a new constitution and by-elections to replace disqualified Awami League's members. But, he made clear, he had no intention of nullifying the December elections.

The President, in a 50 minute nation-wide broadcast, said he had appointed "a committee of experts" whom he did not name to draw up the constitution—the third for the Moslem nation in its 24 years of independence. He said the constitution would be based on Islamic ideology—"on the basis of which Pakistan was created and preserved"—and would provide "maximum autonomy" to the provinces.

But Yahya made clear that there would be no room in the new governmental set-up for the banned East Pakistani based Awami League, which had 167 members in the 313 seats National Assembly before civil strife broke out in the province in March. Nor did Yahya said anything about the fate of the 52 year old Awami League leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman,

who was jailed on 26th March, a few hours after the Pakistani army cracked down on the East Pakistani political movement for demanding greater autonomy for the province—a demand Yahya seemed to concede, in part, in his latest broadcast.

Yahya said the provinces would have legislative, administrative and financial powers which he did not specify, under the new constitution. He also said the federal government would have similar powers in relation to both external and internal affairs.

Yahya stressed that the results of the provincial and national elections held in December and January would stand —although some Awami League leaders would be disqualified from their seats for engaging in "anti-state activities." The vacancies would be filled through by-elections, the President added. "There is no question of holding fresh general elections."

He said, "The mischief of a few misguided elements should not be allowed to nullify the results of the elections." Yahya said he had "not yet finally assessed" the number of Awami League leaders who would be disqualified.

THE ECONOMIST July 10, 1971

THE MUKTI FOUJ IS STILL FIGHTING

Things show no signs of getting better in East Pakistan even though on President Yahya's timetable they should start picking up from now on. No more Awami League members of the National Assembly have come forward to cooperate with the President beyond the 22 who have already declared themselves willing; indeed, a few of those have fled from Dacca because no one know who is to be on the list promised by President Yahya of Awami Leaguers wanted in connection with "crime" committed before the fighting started. The stories say there were at least 32 members on the list.

But even when the list is out, the continued activities of the Mukti Fouj may deter people from collaborating with the Martial Law regime. At the moment the main activity of the Bengali resistance is confined to the border areas, where

India provides sanctuary and a certain amount of assistance from Indian regular troops in the form of covering fire. Even Rajshahi—separated from India by the Ganges, which is some five miles wide during the monsoon I heard noises of skirmishing in the night. Most of the Mukti Fouj's work is sabotage and in one district alone, Comilla, it is officially admitted that eight rail bridges and 15 road bridges have been blown. This is enough to keep the 60,000 men of the Pakistani army in the east busy.

In the interior, the army has more or less had to limit its operations to the Madhupur Forest area north of Dacca, where, there are still more than 100 deserters from the East Pakistan Rifles and the East Bengal Regiment with a few machine-guns and mortars; the Noakhali area, where the Bengali communist leader, Mohammad Toaha, is operating, the Barisal area, where those members of the large community of Hindus who have not made it to India have apparently armed themselves; and the Khulna district, where there is evidence that Naxalites slipped over the border from West Bengal. Otherwise guarding the interior has had to be pretty well a police job.

The 5,000 policemen brought over from West Pakistan face a hideously difficult task in trying to protect the network of bridge that cross the water-ways of East Pakistan. Luckily for them, the Mukti saboteurs in the interior have so far shown themselves pretty incompetent. Last Friday, July 2nd, a pylon was brought down and Dacca was plunged into darkness, and on Monday a bridge on the main road from Dacca to Mymensingh was blown. But the pylon job was not followed up and the lights were on again in Dacca soon afterwards.

It is mainly the Biharis, many of whom were massacred by Bengalis before 25th March, together with Bengali members of the right-wing religious parties such as Jamat-e-Islam and the Muslim League, who are collaborating with the Government. So these people have become the particular target of the Mukti Fouj. There has been a spate of bomb explosion in all the major towns and so far ten 'peace committee' members have been killed in the province. In Khulna, the Chairman of the 'peace committee' got a threatening note from the Naxalites and later had his head chopped off. Captain Zaidi, the peace committee chairman in Pabna,

west of Dacca, who has spent a year in jail for fraud and now runs a petrol station previously owned by a Hindu, has locked gates and three armed guards.

In the smaller towns, life has become more normal than it has been for months, though it is hard to say what is normal in so overpopulated a country. Industrial production is picking up. In Dacca, and in the important industrial town of Khulna, factories have about 60 per cent of their men back at work. But in Chittagong the figure is still very low—about 25 per cent—because most of the labour comes from the troubled area of Noakhali. The vast majority of those who have come back to work are people who have been in hiding inside East Pakistan itself. Few are refugees, returning from India.

The Trouble Isn't Only The Refugees

Democracy has collapsed in West Bengal for the third time since 1967. The State is back in New Delhi's lap with the imposition of President's rule on 29th June. This was preceded by the dissolution of West Bengal's assembly elected last March. The militant Marxist party sees all this as a conspiracy to enable the central government to run the state once again as its "colony".

The truth is that the indecisive outcome of the March elections foredoomed the assembly. The ramshackle coalition put together by Mrs. Gandhi's Congress party had a rather thin majority, which could hardly survive the threats by several members to break loose. The choice before the coalition was whether to risk a defeat or to quit. The decision, eventually, was to quit.

West Bengal was rapidly becoming ungovernable even before the influx of refugees from East Pakistan. Now, with more than five million refugees needing help, the administration is really hard pushed. West Bengal's parties are demanding that the burden should be eased by dispersing the refugees to other states, but so far fewer than 100,000 have actually been moved. Apart from the obvious practical difficulties, the refugees are not anxious to move and the other states are not keen to have them. The central government, for its part, believes that dispersing the refugees may weaken international pressure on Pakistan to take back its citizens.

So most of the refugees will remain in West Bengal. Mrs. Gandhi has taken the unprecedented step of assigning a Bengali member of her cabinet, Mr. S.S. Roy, to take over the job of co-ordinating relations between the state and the central government. His task is partly to handle the refugee problem, partly to nurse sick West Bengal back to health. One of Mr. Roy's most urgent jobs is to halt the political violence which takes a daily toll of at least six lives. There are constant street brawls among activists of different political parties. The Marxists are the main culprits. But the other parties are willing to aid and abet the Maoists, who regard the Marxists "neo-revisionists" meriting maximum vengeance.

TIME Magazine July 12, 1971
INDIA

When Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her new Congress party were returned to power last March, with a two-thirds majority in Parliament, she promised an ambitious development programme that would change the lives of India's almost 600 million people. By last week, however, it was clear that the country's economy never robust, was bogging down for reasons that are not of Mrs. Gandhi's making. More than 60,00,000 refugees have fled to India since the Pakistan Government based in West Pakistan began a savage campaign of repression and terror in East Pakistan, last March. The cost of feeding and sheltering the refugees and caring for thousands of cholera victims will total at least $ 400 million in the first six months.

About 80% of the refugees from predominantly Moslem East Pakistan are Hindus seeking sanctuary in West Bengal and the Eastern Indian States, where their co-religionists are in the vast majority. What particularly worries India is that their chances of even returning home are diminishing. Last week New Delhi said that the Pakistanis were destroying the title deeds of properties owned by the Hindus in East Pakistan. So the Indians may have to accept, on a permanent basis, a Pakistani refugee population that could eventually reach 10 millions.

Little Success

The Indians are angry that they have received so little support on the refugee problem from either East or West. "The international community cannot run away from its responsibilities", Mrs. Gandhi declared two weeks ago. "It will suffer from the consequences of whatever happens in this part of the world".

The most fearful consequence could be war. Reckless as it may seem many Indians were seriously arguing that the only solution to the refugee problem is for the Indian Army to drive the West Pakistan Army out of East Pakistan so that the refugees could return home. Mrs. Gandhi has rejected such talk, but it is growing in volume, even among members of parliament.

In trying to persuade other countries to provide emergency aid and put pressure on the Government to ease its repression in East Pakistan, the Prime Minister has sent several of her colleagues abroad to explain India's predicament, so far with little success.

What the Indians really want is a political settlement between West and East Pakistan. This would amount to an acceptance by West Pakistan of last December's overwhelming victory by Sheikh Mujibur (Mujib) Rahman and his Awami League. In balloting for a constitutional congress, Mujib won 167 of the 169 seats allotted to East Pakistan. Since this showing would have given Mujib an absolute majority in the 313 seat constituent assembly, it would have led to his designation as Prime Minister of all Pakistan. India was greatly pleased by Mujib's victory, since he has been conciliatory towards the Indians. This, in turn, would have enabled India to cut down on the heavy cost, of defending its borders with Pakistan.

But Pakistan's President Agha Mohd. Yahya Khan was loath, to let Mujib attain power in the Central Government and he was even less inclined to grant greater autonomy to East Pakistan. The subsequent crackdown by Pakistan's army, resulting in the slaughtering of hundreds of thousands of East Pakistanis has made a political settlement even more remote.

Ideological Cousins

In the long run the Indians fear that they could be faced on their Eastern Border with an even more threatening force than the Pakistani army. There is a real danger that leadership of the Guerrilla movement in East Pakistan could pass from the shattered Awami League into the hands of the Naxalites, the ideological cousins of the Maoist extremists who have terrorised Calcutta and other pockets of Eastern India. What the Indians fear is an attempt to reunite India's West Bengal with Pakistan's East Bengal which have strong cultural and linguistic ties that could some day transcend the religious differences.

Gun Power

A tough young East Pakistani who calls himself a Naxalite told Time correspondent James Shepherd "For the moment common enemy (of both the Awami League and the East Bengali Naxalites) is the Pakistan army. The arms that India gives to the Awami League will find their way to the Naxalites, and eventually we will fight not only the army but also the bourgeoistic and feudal elements, contemptuous of democratic process." The Naxalite said scornfully: "Now the Awami League leaders are seeing the truth of the saying that the political power grows out of the barrel of the gun."

The problem is that many Indians, too, are thinking of gun power. Even Swaran Singh, India's normally pragmatic Sikh Foreign Minister felt compelled to warn M.Ps. of the ruling New Congress Party during a meeting at week's end. "Unless there is a political settlement, India will be compelled to take action on its own."

NEWSWEEK July 12, 1971
PAKISTAN

Almost from the moment President Md. Yahya Khan unleashed his army on Pakistan's eastern region three months ago, he has been under mounting pressure both at home and from abroad to seek a political rather than a military solution to the crisis. Thus, when Yahya announced that he would

address the nation last week on his plans for the future of Pakistan, there was a ripple of hope that he would finally offer an olive branch to the battered but still defiant Bengalis of East Pakistan. The speech, however, proved a stunning disappointment to those who longed for an end to the strife that has cost more than 200,000 Bengali lives and driven 6 million refugees into India. "That wasn't a speech" quipped one foreign diplomat, "it was a regimental order".

There was good reason for this view, for instead of seeking to convince the Bengalis that they still had a future within united Pakistan, Yahya seemed bent on antagonising them even further. He blamed the civil war on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the imprisoned political leader of the East claiming that the Mujib had plotted from the beginning to divide the nation "through physical violence". Banning the East Pakistan based Awami League, which won control of the National Assembly in last December elections, the President promised to revive National and Provincial Legislatures as soon as "Law and Order" is restored. But above all Yahya made it clear that even if such a "Transfer of Power" to civilians is achieved at a still unspecified date martial law would continue for sometime.

Hostility

Small wonder, then, that Yahya's words, were received coolly in West Pakistan and with open hostility in the East. Said one high Bengali Civil Servant "Yahya has offered us nothing but the back of his hand, of course this is a boon to the liberation movement. If he had offered us something, there might have been some who would have given it a try. This way he has assured the undying opposition of Bengal."

The evidence last week was that such opposition was not to be taken lightly. For despite the fact that the West Pakistani army still controls East Pakistan, there are numerous indications, that the rebellion is far from over. The once disorganised Mukti Fouj liberation fighters have recently shown impressive progress in guerrilla warfare. They have blown up dozens of bridges cutting major rail lines and highways. They have destroyed Electric Power Plants, and assassinated members of non-Bengali "Peace Com-

mittee" appointed by the military to provide local Government. As a result, Yahya's army is growing nervous, and two additional divisions have been requested to reinforce the four already, in the Eastern region. "This is the way it started in Vietnam", one foreign diplomat in the East Pakistan capital, Dacca, told Newsweek's Lawrence Jenkins last week. The army can hold on as long as it is willing to pay the price. But the Government cannot afford to fight a protracted guerrilla war.

A similar conclusion was reached last week by a team from the World Bank, which co-ordinates an eleven-nation consortium that supplies about $ 500 million a year in aid to Pakistan. After touring the devastated Eastern region, the team recommended that aid be withheld in an effort to force Yahya to seek a political solution to the strife. The only opposition came from U.S., which announced that it would continue its aid to Islamabad in order to maintain its influence with Yahya, and presumably to enhance the possibility of persuading him to move toward peace. The fallacy in such thinking, of course, is that neither side in the conflict has shown any inclination to negotiate. Indeed it may well be, as one diplomat in Dacca noted last week, that there can be no reconciliation. "Pakistan died the day the army entered in the Eastern Region."

THE WEEKLY ECONOMIST (London) July 17, 1971
THE BENGAL PRESSURE BUILDS UP ON MRS. GANDHI

India is known to be giving the Mukti Fouj—the guerrillas in East Pakistan, some help. But how much help, neither party is eager to reveal. Sanctuary, invaluable to all guerrillas, is certainly being granted, and perhaps covering fire from the Indian border security forces. Training may still be in the hands of guerrillas themselves. But since even those of them who were previously a regular part of the Pakistan army had no training with explosives, and since they have recently pulled off some spectacular bridge blowing, it is likely that Indian sappers have been providing the explosives

and know-how. Certainly the Mukti Fouj needs training. The East Pakistan Rifles and the East Bengal Regiment, which have now been merged into it, have dropped their previous tactics of fighting in battle order and now operate in small groups. But it will be harder to persuade them to swallow their regimental pride and wear civilian clothes.

The Bangla Desh "government in exile" complains it is not getting enough arms from India. Originally the Indians seized all arms coming over the border for fear that they might get into the hands of West Bengal extremists. Almost all of these have been returned to the Mukti Fouj, some small arms, grenades and mines have also been supplied. The small arms have been necessary because India can supply no ammunition to fit the guerrillas' Chinese weapons. The most lethal weapons they have managed to extract from the Indians are a few three-inch mortars. The Indians are inhibited by the fear that arms with Indian markings would provoke Pakistan, to use the surplus stock of foreign-made weapons they still have. Those Indians who demand recognition of Bangla Desh are far from satisfied with the present scale of aid, and there are now serious pressure on Mrs. Gandhi to get off the fence.

Refugees are still flowing into India at a daily rate of 40,000 and the official total stood at 6.8 million last Saturday. Nothing like this number can be dispersed in central India. Since the official policy is to prevent the refugees from integrating with the local population and from competing in the local labour markets, the entire cost must be borne by the central government and the border states. The reckoning, either increased taxes or deficit financing, will have to come soon. But Mrs. Gandhi, foreseeing her likely difficulties in parliament, will probably not disclose, her plans for raising the money until the summer recess next month.

So far there has been no communal trouble except in Assam, where several thousand refugees were forced back into East Pakistan. Political parties have been unusually co-operative in toning down their statements, but the Hindu communalist Jan Sangh party is to start agitating from the beginning of next month; and the slightest incident could spark off rioting against the 60 million Indian Muslims. Mrs. Gandhi has even had trouble within her own Congress party. This

was effectively quelled last week, but she cannot afford to ignore these pressures with the ten states assembly elections coming up within the next nine months.

Up to now Mrs. Gandhi has been able to point to various external factors that might encourage the refugees to turn home. First, it was hoped that the war effort would break the Pakistan economy and force the withdrawal of the Pakistan army. Failing that, foreign aid donors would force President Yahya to see sense. Then it was hoped that the monsoon would bog down the Pakistan army and help the Mukti Fouj. But now there is wild talk about a war being cheaper than feeding millions of refugees. The government itself has not been party to this sort of nonsense, but it seems genuinely undecided what to do. Even the policy of stepping up help for the guerrillas carries the risk of creating more refugees as the Pakistani army takes reprisals for sabotage. It could also jeopardise the goodwill India has earned by shouldering the refugee problem.

NEWSWEEK July 19, 1971

PAKISTAN

THE BENGALIS STRIKE BACK

"I am glad to be able to tell you," declared Pakistan President Mohammad Yahya Khan in a recent address to his nation "that the army is in full control of the situation in East Pakistan. It has crushed the mischief-mongers, saboteurs and infiltrators." Alas for Yahya, the facts told a different story. Throughout East Pakistan, the embattled Bengali resistance movement seemed more determined than ever to prove, that it was alive and well—and capable of making life extremely difficult for the heavily armed but thinly spread occupation forces of the Pakistani Army.

All across Pakistan's ravaged eastern province, revitalized rebel units made their presence felt last week in no uncertain terms. Taking advantage of a crash training program and of

weapons, and ammunition supplied by India, Mukti Bahini (Liberation Army) went on the offensive. Factories were sabotaged. Key bridges were toppled by well-placed dynamic blasts. Vital barge traffic was attacked from concealed machine gun emplacements. And railroad locomotives operating on the relatively few remaining open routes were blown off the tracks by mines.

Threat

Though the heaviest attacks were concentrated near the Indian border, even the East Pakistani capital of Dacca, 90 miles away, came under rebel fire. Exchanges of gunshots and occasional explosions reverberated through the city's streets. And in one daring, late night attack earlier this month, Bengali insurgents knocked out the Dacca Power Plants main transformer, plunging the capital into total darkness for more than six hours. "It may be too early to view the Mukti Bahini as a serious military threat," said one Western diplomat in Dacca last week. "But there is no doubt that what we are witnessing is the first stage of bloody, long-lasting guerrilla warfare".

Fuelling this mounting struggle was the Bengali rebels' outrage at the Pakistani Army's continued indiscriminate violence in dealing with their uprising. In retaliation, the rebels have escalated their guerrilla attacks to include random terrorism of their own. In a warning to the population, not to attend performances where a state tax is collected, a rebel grenade was tossed into the crowded Gulistan Cinema in Dacca, killing one person and injuring fourteen. Similarly, a small bomb exploded outside the suburban Dhanmondi residence of the U.S. Consul-General in an apparent protest against American shipments of arms and supplies to the Pakistani Government.

"In the countryside," cabled Newsweek's Loren Jenkins, who toured the eastern region last week, "things have gone much further. In the Ganges Delta town of Khulna, two pro-army officials—Ghulam Sarwar Mullah and Abdul Hamid Khalna—recently received 'red letters' from rebel groups marking them for assassination. Despite the fact that both men surrounded themselves with bodyguards of razakars

(pro-government vigilants), both were dead within a week. Bengali rebels gunned down Hamid in broad daylight. And a fierce band of black-masked guerrillas stormed Sarwar's home, routed the corps of razakars, then lopped off Sarwar's head and took it with them."

Message

The Pakistani Army under Lt.-Gen. Tikka Khan, the military governor of East Pakistan, has responded in kind. After guerrillas blew up a bridge north of Dacca, Punjabi soldiers put several neighbouring villages to the torch, killing scores of residents and taking others into custody. In the case of the Khulna assassinations, Jenkins reported that the army's response was even more terrifying: "The morning after Sarwar was beheaded, workers travelling to Khulna's jute mills found seventeen dead bodies lined up neatly in front of the railroad station. Their hands had been tied behind their backs and each man had been shot. The army left the bodies in view for a full 24 hours to make sure the population got the message."

But just how successful the Pakistani Army's tactics would be in keeping an estimated 30,000 guerrillas in check remained very much in doubt. True, wherever Tikka Khan chose to concentrate his troops, the army seemed likely to maintain the upperhand. But elsewhere the outlook was bleak. The Mukti Bahini can draw on the teeming East Pakistan population of more than 70 million. And far from cowing that population into submission each new army atrocity has seemed to strengthen the Bengali resolve. "Yahya Khan and the military high command thought they could terrorise the Bengalis", a Western diplomat in Dacca told Jenkins last week. "The result has been just the opposite. Sure the Bengali has been frightened. But he has also been made to hate as he never did before—and he realizes that it is only through violence that he has a chance to free himself."

THE TIMES (DAILY) TUESDAY, July 20, 1971

BENGAL: THE LIMITED OPTION OPEN TO PAKISTAN'S PRESIDENT

When President Yahya Khan ordered his troops into action in East Pakistan on March 25, to quell what he considered a dangerous threat to the integrity of the country, it is unlikely that he foresaw the consequences: a people living in terror of the army and economic life disrupted, and ahead only the prospect of a prolonged military occupation of the colonial type, harassed by the increasing activity of guerrilla groups.

Nor, alas, is there much sign that the President, who depends entirely on his military commanders for information, has any clearer grasp of the consequences now. A blunt, amiable soldier, President Yahya is intellectually and temperamentally unequipped to make the sort of responses that might just conceivably salvage something from the disaster in the east. His credit with the Bengalis, certainly, is completely exhausted.

It is, in a way, a personal, as well as a national tragedy. For there is little doubt that President Yahya genuinely desired a return to democratic rule. The elections that were held last December under his direction were remarkably fair and free—their fairness and freeness being liberally trumpeted at the time by those who now attribute the sweeping victory of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League to demagoguery and the "reign of terror" imposed by the party's "Nazi storm troopers".

The President made several serious errors. The first was to have allowed the political parties 120 days within which to agree upon the outlines of a constitution to be passed by a constituent assembly. Out of this grew the bickering and quarrelling that directly precipitated the Army's intervention in March.

A second, as related, error was not to have foreseen the constitutional difficulties posed by a country in which neither of the two main parties has a national base. Mr. Zulfikar Ali

Bhutto, the leader in the west wing of the Pakistan People's Party, seized upon this to press his claim for representation in a coalition government in spite of having won only 82 of the 313 seats in the National Assembly.

Mr. Bhutto's argument was that the Awami League could not reasonably expect, even on the basis of its absolute majority in the assembly (where it won 167 seats), to dictate terms to the whole of Pakistan when it was represented in only one-half. It was a pretty thin argument. But it had just enough legal and constitutional substance to provide the President with an excuse to postpone the meeting of the constituent assembly that was planned for March 3.

It should, in fairness, be noted that the Sheikh's own motives are far from clear. There is broad agreement among witnesses of the pre-March events in Islamabad and Dacca that there was a period when he could have become Prime Minister of Pakistan without sharing power with Mr. Bhutto, if he had been prepared to make concessions on certain points.

There were, admittedly, key-points, such as the right of the provincial governments to determine trade policies and the amount of revenue to be consumed by the armed forces.

There is not much doubt that by the middle of March the use of armed force, as a final option, was firmly implanted in the minds of the President and his advisers. A large-scale airlift of troops from the west wing—though absolutely denied by the military authorities in Dacca—was carried out clandestinely throughout the month. Even this does not necessarily mean, however, that negotiations between the President and the Sheikh were cynically prolonged merely to allow the army to make its preparations. Not that the President, if not all of his generals, did not hope for a last minute settlement.

The case, such as it is, for President Yahya, while historically important, can have no relevance to what happened after March 25. Precisely what the Army's orders were we may never know. A swift police action? A shortlived dose of terror to bring a rebellious population back into line? Or genocide, the organized massacre of an entire political and cultural group?

Genocide is a large claim. It implies the existence of an apparatus of extermination and of a degree of planning and premeditation that has yet to be proven. But that the

army conducted a systematic persecution of an important segment of the population of East Pakistan there can no longer be any reasonable doubt. Armed rebellion came in response to and did not provoke, the army's action.

What, if anything can or is likely to be done to remedy the situation ? The short answer is nothing—by which is meant nothing resembling a genuine or lasting solution. Such a remedy would have to include, at the very least, the release from jail of Sheikh Mujib, the transfer of political power to the duly elected representatives of the people, the withdrawal of the army to its barracks and a public expression of regret by the President.

It would be a lot to expect of any government ; let alone the government sitting in Islamabad. There are degrees of military occupation. No doubt, General Tikka Khan, a bullying authoritarian of circumscribed intelligence, could one day be replaced as military governor in the east wing by someone more moderate. No doubt the army could modify its policy of arrests, interrogations and summary shootings that still continue if at a diminishing level.

But such measures would not begin to provide an answer to the basic question: how can the two halves of Pakistan be kept together save by naked force ? The government and the army are the victims of their own propaganda. They are convinced that Bengali nationalism was the artificial creation of a minority of extremists who can be isolated and eliminated.

In the background looms the worrying prospect of armed conflict with India. This is a cause of real concern. For it is difficult to see how such a conflict could not but work to the disadvantage of Pakistan whose armed forces are now desparately stretched between the two wings with the effect that neither is adequately defended.

The army has so far made no attempt to pursue guerrilla groups beyond the borders of East Pakistan or to raid their sanctuaries on Indian soil. This, the army knows, would be to invite Indian retaliation. For the present the only conclusion that makes sense—barring the possibility of an accidental flare-up is that war between India and Pakistan would be the result of a deliberate decision by the Indians to provoke it.

By : Michael Hornsby.

FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW July 24, 1971

PAKISTAN

YAHYA AGGRIEVED

By : Werner Adam

Islamabad

While the Pakistani troops in the Eastern wing face a sudden accumulation of bomb attempts and other acts of sabotage which, for the first time, indicate a more sophisticated resistance and signal further difficulties in "normalising" the situation, Islamabad is becoming increasingly irritable about its external critics.

India, sympathising openly with the secessionist forces, remains a major target, but it now shares this distinction with former colonial ruler Britain whose public and official opinion still carries disproportionately great weight in Pakistan.

The Pakistan Press launched a campaign against England's mass media in general and the BBC in particular. It was followed by a strong protest from the foreign office over certain parts of an "agreed statement," issued at the conclusion of talks India's Foreign Minister Swaran Singh recently had with his British colleagues Sir Alec Douglas Home and Prime Minister Edward Heath; their call for a political solution to the Pakistani crisis "acceptable to the people of East Pakistan" and the tributes Sir Alec paid to India's "restraint and generosity" in dealing with the refugee problem.

The Islamabad note alleged New Delhi's idea of a political settlement was agreement with the leaders of the defunct Awami League who, by agitating for East Pakistan's secession, had brought on the present crisis. India, it said, had not only been sending infiltrators into East Pakistan and sustaining a "Provisional Government of Bangla Desh" on its soil, but was even now training and equipping "as much as 40,000 miscreants and supporters of Bangla Desh within its territory."

Not content with this, the press reproached Sir Alec for having urged the aid Pakistan consortium to suspend its

financial and economic assistance to Pakistan pending a political solution to the East Bengal crisis.

Mirza Ahmed, President Yahya Khan's economic adviser added official weight to press complaints; "if the present attitude of the aid-giving countries, constituted an attempt to influence our domestic political solution, it is wholly contrary to their own profession that aid to developing countries is without political strings."

Hard upon all these troubles came Canada's decision not only to prohibit the further export of defence equipment to Pakistan, but to suspend the shipment of 46 crates of F-86 Sabre Jet parts destined for Karachi. Of the Western countries only the United States, seemed willing to deliver military goods. President Richard Nixon's special envoy Henry Kissinger was given a warm welcome in Islamabad this month as a representative of country which had shown "understanding and helpfulness towards Pakistan's difficulties", as the Pakistan Times put it.

Whether this honeymoon will survive the present arms delivery remains to be seen particularly as the U.S has fully adopted the consortium's wait-and-see policy towards Pakistan. Islamabad cannot however afford to fall out with leading western power since the Soviet Union has, from beginning, taken the same view as India of the Bangla Desh problem. For Islamabad the only international alternative would then be China which, notwithstanding its firm political support for the Pakistan generals, is, by no means, in a position to replace the western donor countries.

Freight On Board
By : Michael Malloy

Washington

The mystery over arms shipment to Pakistan continues. Two things are clear that an embargo was imposed by the U.S. in March; and that arms are still reaching Pakistan. American attempts to explain the situation are, however, gloriously confused. 45 officials in Pakistan have claimed Washington purposely continued the arms flow in secret in order to retain some influence of the treatment accorded to Bengalis. In Washington it was maintained they were still

being sent because President Richard Nixon didn't want China to become Pakistan's sole arm suppliers.

Last week-end the refusal of American Longshoremen to load the Padma brought the affair into sharp focus—without however, clarifying anything. The U.S. State department, having announced in April that no arms had "been provided to the Pakistan government or its agents since March 2, and nothing is now scheduled for such delivery". The Pakistan freighter had contracted to carry exactly U.S. $ 1,231,158 worth of arms, some of which had already been loaded in New York, the rest to join the ship at Baltimore. It included three piston aircraft engines of repair test standard.

On Sunday the Padma set sail, with the Baltimore dockers surprisingly expressing themselves convinced by an assurance from the owners, backed by International Longshoremen's Association President Thomas Gleason, that there were no arms on board. There was no comment from Washington.

If the State department had its facts wrong, it was politically a remarkable error. And it had been unaccustomedly precise. Was it trying to anticipate a public row, or replying to the New York Times which had made the original discovery about the Padma when it was being loaded in New York ?

Or was it retaliating on the President for putting it in an impossible position ? It appears the embargo had been proposed, vetoed by Nixon and then announced anyway. Less than a month later another Pakistan vessel, the Sunderbans was steaming home with a load of armoured personnel carriers. Several more shiploads are scheduled. The sale of arms to Pakistan has had a murky history since 1965 when the first embargo was placed on both India and Pakistan. Sales resumed two years later of weapons termed "non-lethal" a category which soon appeared to include any weapon the government finds embarrassing to describe in greater detail, and covered shipments put at up to $20 million a year in value.

Meantime, Pakistan has served a useful purpose as a secret take off pad for Kissinger. Islamabad must be hoping Nixon will appreciate its co-operation more than the views of informed opinion at home.

KAYHAN (International) July 27, 1971

THE RELUCTANT PRESIDENT

[*Kayhan International's Amir Taheri has just completed a week-long tour of Pakistan during which he visited both wings of the country. He also met a number of Pakistani leaders, including President Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan. Here he gives an account of the interview with Yahya. This is the first in a series of articles on the recent events which brought Pakistan to the brink of civil war.*]

By : Amir Taheri

The Presidential palace at Rawalpindi, Pakistan, looks like any other residence of a head of state in this part of the world. Vigilant guards at the gates maintain a constant sentry. A lieutenant-general paces the waiting room in measured, unhurried steps. A couple of brigadiers stroll on the deep-green lawn. Tall, turbaned waiters serve visitors deep black coffee. There are huge corridors and vast offices where faintly smiling officials rustle their way through the papers.

Then there is the Presidential office itself with the scarlet velvet furnishing that is somehow associated with authority. On the wall, there is a huge portrait of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Soldier At Heart

The man who works in this room is four-star general Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan, officially the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, but at heart still a pure soldier who, one immediately gets the impression, would be happiest in his uniform as the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed forces.

This, in fact, is the first point he emphasizes. His close associates remind friendly visitors that the President still prefers to sign himself in as the army C-in-C whenever he

visits a club, an exhibition or any other "non-political establishment."

We met Yahya Khan the other day when he just returned from a few day's working holiday in Abbottabad, the centre of his native part of the mountainous Northwest Frontier Province that has given Pakistan some of its bravest soldiers. In Abbottabad he presided over a meeting of the military chiefs and took time off to think about the turbulent events of the past civil war.

The 56 year old silver-haired Pathan soldier, who speaks in a deep untrained voice, was at pains to remind us that he did not seek the presidency and that he was put in the palace at 'Pindi' when Field-Marshal Ayub Khan stepped down under popular pressure just over two years ago. When Yahya Khan came to power, first as Chief Martial Law Administrator and later as President, he did not, perhaps even, dream of the day he would have to order his army into East Pakistan to crush what he describes as a secessionist movement inspired by India.

"Right from the start," he told us, "my sole objective was to restore law and order in the country and to hand over power to an elected civilian government. That objective remains unchanged."

Free Elections

True to the Pakistani army's tradition of staying out of politics he lifted the ban Ayub imposed on free political activity and allowed the old parties to return to the scene while new parties also came into being. Then Pakistan's first free general election took place on the basis of universal adult franchise late last year. For a few months of glowing hope, Pakistan seemed to be heading for a democratic system in which the political parties would be free to fight each other for power and base themselves on popular backing.

A few months later, however, the Awami League, the East Pakistan party that had won a sweeping victory at the polls was banned and its chief leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman accused of secessionism and high treason.

The Pakistan People's Party which won the election in the west wing of the geographically divided country was also

told to forget the possibility of coming to power, at least for the time being.

"I was prepared to do all that was necessary, provided the unity of Pakistan would not be undermined," Yahya Khan told us in an unmistakably sad tone, "I was not interested in this chair and was all along waiting for the first chance to return to my life of a soldier".

With an air of dejection, he went on to say that he had been let down by the politicians who could not agree among themselves and who later brought the country to "the brink of partition".

Compromise with Mujib

He recalled how he had gone out of his way to reach a compromise with Sheikh Mujib. He had flown to Dacca, East Pakistan to meet the Sheikh although the latter should have gone to 'Pindi to see him'.

"I even said he would be Pakistan's next Prime Minister," he reminisced "I did not believe what was said about the man and thought that all he was interested in was putting the situation in the east wing right. I knew that the East Pakistanis had legitimate grievances, and I was ready to hand over power to the Awami League provided I was assured that Pakistan would not be split into two separate countries."

Yahya Khan added that he had been prepared to give East Pakistan "the largest measure of autonomy ever thought of in politics" but that he had to take military action when he was convinced that Sk. Mujib had prepared a full plan for secession.

The President's abortive attempt to give Pakistan a democratic system has already led to so many difficulties that many people, some in the army, seem convinced that no fresh experiments should be made.

And yet Yahya Khan insists that a civilian government must take over. He told us he hoped there would be such a government before the 2500th anniversary of the Iranian monarchy in October and in any case before the end of the current year.

"I am determined to hand over power to the elected representatives of the people", he emphasised.

By-Elections In The East

At the moment he is busy preparing the grounds for a series of by-election in East Pakistan to fill vacancies created by the banned Awami League National Assembly members' departure to India. The number of Awami League deputies who have fled to India is estimated to be 40, out of a total of 168. Some of them will be able to return and retain their seats since a general amnesty has been given to all people guilty of "political crimes."

The sole exceptions made about people charged with high treason or found guilty of "murder, rape, arson, loot, violence and armed robbery".

Disqualified Deputies

The President refused to say how many Awami League deputies would be disqualified but assured us that an announcement would be made very soon. A special committee has been set up to decide on the matter.

The by-elections, he told us, would not take place on one day since he did not wish to have "forces of law and order stretched too thin". All AL members 'not guilty of crimes' would be able to stand as independents. The President will be visiting East Pakistan within the next few days and the by-elections are expected to take place in August.

Once all the vacancies are filled, the National Assembly will be immediately convened. It will no longer be charged with the tasks of drafting a constitution but would be asked to form a government. A draft constitution prepared by the President's own advisors will be submitted to the Assembly as "a broad framework". The assembly will be able to amend it in whatever way it deems fit.

The draft constitution, Yahya Khan told us, "will be based on the demands of the parties. I know what the politicians want and I have asked my advisors to take all their demands into account, keeping in mind that whatever

is necessary should be done to preserve the unity of the country".

We asked him if it was true that he had been advised to set up a "puppet civilian government" consisting of a number of highly unpopular figures in both wings. He said this was a rumour and that, as a soldier, he considered rumour-mongering as "a crime".

"I don't listen to rumours", he emphasised. "I am a soldier and always speak my mind openly. I don't use tactics like that".

Civilian Government

We asked if he would consider forming a government with the help of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's People's Party. He said that Bhutto had a majority only in the west wing, but a civilian government should consist of representatives of "the two parts of the country".

In any case, since a civilian government would be formed "in a matter of months' all the parties could wait a bit longer," he said. "I must have a full national assembly representing the nation as a whole" Yahya Khan said. "I will be prepared to accept a civilian government formed by such an assembly, but would not hand over power to any one individual or party before that is done".

Meanwhile, the President has given the green light for Pakistan's Five-Pear Development Plan to continue. "I cannot throw the economy to the dogs, pending the formation of a civil government," he said, "The national economy cannot come to a standstill just because we have had political difficulties".

Once a civilian government is formed, however, the plan could be altered in accordance with the new government's wishes and policies, he assured us.

We asked the President what would happen if AL members won all the by-elections in East Pakistan, if they formed a majority once again, and if they tried to put into effect the same policies that, according to the army, would have led to a division of Pakistan.

He replied that the Awami League had won the previous election through the use of "intimidation, terror and malpractices". We asked why he did not stop the general election as soon as it became clear that Sheikh Mujib's party was breaking the game.

Election malpractices occurred in every country, including the most advanced—the President said. In any case, he said he did not have accurate information about Awami League activities at that time. "It is now that we realize what Mujib was doing to win every seat," he said. "Most of his men were returned unopposed because people were afraid of challenging the Awami League. He won mainly due to the Hindu minorities vote in East Pakistan; no more than 20 per cent of the Muslim electorate backed his men".

High Treason

He said "Mujib would be tried for high treason very soon —that is, as soon as the case against him is complete".

We asked whether the Awami League leader would be tried and possibly executed before the new national assembly convened. The President said the matter was in the hands of military justice and he could not give any exact date for the trial. "He would be court-martialed, and I cannot say whether or not he would be alive when the assembly meets," he added.

Asked what his government intended to do about the East Pakistan refugees now living in India, Yahya Khan said that he had invited all of them to return but was not sure that his invitation had been communicated to the displaced persons. "Some 80,000 refugees had already returned home and about 1000 were coming in every day through unofficial channels". India, however, was doing its best to prevent the refugees from returning home, Yahya Khan said. It was doing so because Mrs. Gandhi wished to use the issue as a political weapon against Pakistan.

"India," the President said, "has set up training camps for rebels in its territory. Some 35,000 rebels are being trained and the displaced persons are being used as a means of pressure on Pakistan."

We asked if it was true that a "new Tashkent" had been proposed by the Soviet Union. The President said he had no official information on this. "I am ready to meet the Indian leaders anywhere and anytime, provided we discuss the return of the displaced persons, treating the issue as a humanitarian one and not political", he said. "But they have refused all our offers of negotiations and sabotaged the work of the United Nations in this respect. They hope to break Pakistan and think they have no interest in talking to us".

He added that India was openly saying it would not allow the refugees to return to "Yahya Khan's Pakistan but only to Mujib's Bangla Desh".

Under Pressure

"This", he said, "is clear intervention in our internal affairs and, obviously, we reject it".

He repeated that he was a soldier and would not give in to any pressure. "They say", he went on, "that I am under pressure from this or that big power. That is nonsense. Those who say it don't know me. A man can be subjected to pressure only if he is interested in this chair. I am not, and I have made it clear that I shall throw any aid back in the donor's face if there are any strings attached".

Yahya Khan said that the Soviet and American governments had adopted "a correct policy" towards Pakistan right from the start of the crisis but he could not say the same about Britain.

"The British government" he said, "has been openly hostile to us, trying to meddle in our internal affairs. Their foreign secretary has made this clear. As a member of the Commonwealth, we had expected Britain to remain at least neutral and not back India so openly".

We told Yahya Khan of talks we had heard in Pakistan about keeping him President at least for a few more years.

"I am not interested," he said. "My mandate is clear: it is to keep the country united and to give it a civilian government and then leave".

We reminded him that the People's Party, the main political force in the west wing, wanted him to stay on as President, provided a civilian government is formed.

"The People's Party" he said, "represents only one part of the country. If the national assembly, that is the collective will of the people, wants me to stay on. I will. Otherwise, I would be too glad to return to the army".

President Yahya Khan spoke warmly of Iran during our meeting, which lasted nearly 75 minutes. He described the Shahanshah as "Pakistan's greatest well-wisher" and Iran as "a great source of strength for us". He recalled Iran's help to Pakistan throughout its history and said Pakistan always took heart in knowing that Iran, now "the strongest power in this region, stands behind it.

"We are not two countries" he said quoting a Persian verse that says, "We are the same soul in two bodies".

"I myself am an Iranian," he said. "My ancestors came to the sub-continent from Iran. At home, our language is Persian and we take pride in our nation's cultural affinity and unshakable bonds with Iran. I have not been talking to you as an outsider but as my own brother or my own son. My message to the people of Iran is just the salaam of one member of the great family to the other members.....Having come to our country you have, in fact, travelled in another part of Iran. We thank God for having given Iran increasing economic and defence strength, and we pray to the Almighty for the greater success of the Shahanshah—a success which will be that of Iran, Pakistan, the whole Muslim World".

KAYHAN International July 28, 1971

FIVE VIEWS OF A TRAGEDY

By : Amir Taheri

"Oh, this is now a matter for the historian," an East Pakistani friend told me in Dacca the other day when I asked him to give his version of the events that plunged the unhappy land into bloodshed last spring. He was perhaps right.

But journalism is the writing of instant history. I decided to ask a number of people to give their accounts of what happened in East Pakistan. It might take many years before the thick fog of unreality created by propaganda and prevarication on all sides clears away. Nevertheless, it is possible to form a provisional picture approaching the reality of the events in East Pakistan. In this article, we shall see different views of the dramatic events of spring.

(i) Lt.-General Tikka Khan

Tikka Khan is the military governor of East Pakistan. He arrived on the scene shortly before the decks were cleared for the bloody confrontation between the army and the Awami League partisans of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. He smiles broadly, has a slight nervous tick and speaks at top speed. He received us in his mansion in the centre of Dacca. His 3½ year old son was also present at the meeting, lashing out at imaginary flies with his toy whip. This is what Tikka Khan had to say in response to a series of questions I put to him :

I was sent here shortly before the rupture came. I was asked to do two things : first, to keep the army united and, secondly, to keep the door open for further negotiations with Mujibur Rahman. The President had made it clear to me that under no circumstances was I to cause a breakdown of all chances of further talks. It did not take me long to realize that Mujib was hell-bent on secession. His party and his friends were working in that direction. Yet, I did not take any action against them until the eleventh hour. We all wanted a settlement.

During the election campaign, Mujib had made it clear both publicly and in private that his Six-point Programme was negotiable. The Programme would lead to a virtual division of Pakistan, but we took no action against Mujib because he had assured us that there would be a compromise. Later, two dramatic events took place. First Mujib swore in public not to make any compromise on his Six-Points. By doing so he destroyed all chances of agreement.

Then, he set up a parallel government while we were here. He closed the National Bank in Dacca and gave its duties to another bank. He stamped on the Pakistani bank

The decline and fall of Shaikh Mujib

by AMIR TAHERI



Kayhan International : 1-8-72.



Time : 2-8-71.



Bangladesh intellectual killed and left to the crows.
Photo : Kishor Parekh.



A dead body being torn to bits by dog.
Courtesy : Amiya Tarafdar.



Inauguration of Provisional Govt. at Mujib Nagar in April, 1971.



Newsweek : 2-8-71.



The only survivor of the family.
Newsweek : 2-8-71.

notes "The Independent State of Bangla Desh" and made it clear that he would never agree to join a National Assembly that would include representatives from West Pakistan. He wanted two Assemblies.

Furthermore, he preached hatred against the armed forces and said he would put us all on trial. Through his agents, he told the East Pakistani soldiers and officers to desert the armed forces and the police, while he set up a para-military organisation of his own. All along, however, we hoped that he would realise that the army would not allow him to divide Pakistan, he failed to see this and underestimated our resolve. He had told the press, radio and television in East Pakistan not to publish or broadcast any news of Pakistan and to ban whatever information we wished to publish. Then he ordered the pulling down of Pakistani flags and insignia from all public buildings and banks. At a ceremony, his supporters burned the Pakistani flags and all the pictures of Jinnah (the founder of Pakistan) were destroyed in Dacca.

As you can imagine, our patience knew no bounds. When Pakistan Day came, Mujib and his supporters called it "Bangla Desh Day" and no mention was made of Pakistan. They told the TV not to show the Pakistani flag. I told the TV people I would close down their programme if they did so. They showed the flag a few seconds after midnight—that is, after the Pakistan Day had officially ended. Then they made fun of me on that score and said they had their Bangla Desh Day. The Sheikh himself appeared all smiles and waved a Bangla Desh flag.

That was not all. We had reports pouring into army headquarters about atrocities committed against the non-Bengali soldiers, and officers of the regular army were involved in massacres of the Biharis and the West Pakistanis.

At that time my forces occupied only 20 square miles of East Pakistan's 55,000 square miles. Mujib and his Indian backers had never thought it possible for us to fan out of this 20 square miles and work our way through a complete control of the province with amazing speed. This we did although at that time our forces were outnumbered one to 18. The rebels had some 80,000 armed men ; most of them were trained by ourselves and members of the East Bengal

Regiment and the East Pakistan Rifles. The Indians had given them large quantities of arms. They murdered their West Pakistani officers along with their wives and children and spread a reign of terror in the country.

I remember when I had to order the chaps into action, we had planned a cricket match that day and we had to cancel it. The boys knew they would be fighting against heavy odds, but they fought for Pakistan, and this gave them double strength. We smashed the rebels quickly and secured the borders, preventing the Indians from bringing in their regular forces to seize a part of East Pakistan and call it Bangla Desh as they had planned. Our speed surprised the Indians and destroyed all their dreams.

I cannot say the situation is completely back to normal but the army is in full control of the province. There is no fighting, although we are mopping out pockets of resistance. There are acts of sabotage, to be sure only the other day there were three bomb attacks in Dacca itself—one against a power plant. The jute convoy has also been attacked on several occasions and now we send the jute to Chittagong with an escort of soldiers.

The lies published by the Indians make me laugh. On the second day of the disturbances they said I had been assassinated. The same day the American Consul-General told me jokingly that the Indians had said he, too, had attended my funeral.

Then they spread rumours that the star was shining on my own head and that I was such a power-hungry butcher. They also said we are massacring the Hindu minority as if we had nothing else to do. Our boys attacked a village near Dacca to round up some miscreants, and in the process two villagers were killed. The Indians said we had killed 2,000 Hindus. In fact only one of the two chaps killed was a Hindu.

Now the Indians are training troops for the so-called Mukti Fouj (Liberation Army) of Mujib. There are training camps all along our borders. But they won't be able to harm us in any serious way unless they launch a full-scale attack by their own army. That would be army fighting army and we shall meet the eventuality.

(ii) **Awami Leaguer M.S.**

M.S., who does not wish his identity to be known, was an active member of the banned Awami League. I had met him in Dacca last winter and he called on me again last week in East Pakistan. He had escaped to the countryside when the troubles broke out, but has returned to Dacca under the general amnesty declared by President Yahya Khan. This is what he told me:

The night of the 26th of March was a true Indonesian night in Dacca. Everyone knew that the rupture had come and that there would be reprisals and counter-reprisals. The army had lists of Awami League activists and naturally it started rounding them up under the cover of a curfew. The student leaders, most of whom were active Naxalites and responsible for attacks on West Pakistani families, were the first targets. At least 100 of them were shot immediately after arrest. Others were killed while trying to make their escape.

The Awami League extremists meanwhile took their revenge and massacred as many non-Bengali as they could get hold of. The dream of a political settlement had been shattered with such speed that those of us who were still hoping for a compromise were taken completely aback.

Once the army action started, the Awami Leaguers in villages and remote towns began murdering the non-Bengalis whom they feared to be "spies." In any case they were afraid that the non-Bengalis would help the army identify the activists. So they killed the Biharis, the Punjabis and others out of sheer fright.

In Dacca alone some 10,000 people have been killed while some people put the number as high as half a million. But there are no means of establishing any true figure. Many people have left the town and are still hiding in villages. So, their relatives and friends think they are dead. My own friends had written me off as dead while I was in hiding. Every day more people are coming out of their hideouts. So, the number of those presumed dead is being reduced every day.

Most of us do not believe that Mujib wanted secession, although the student leaders and their friends in the leadership did want it. My own reckoning is that Mujib wanted to

separate East Bengal from Pakistan in the long run—not immediately—but was forced to speed up his work and reveal his plans under pressure from the Naxalites and Bengali nationalists in Calcutta.

I cannot say what will happen next. No one can. The army is in military control but the political problem remains untouched. The trouble is that so much hatred and suspicion has been created that it is difficult to start a dialogue between the people and the army. Even the Bengali civil servants who agree to co-operate with the army are still suspect. Hundreds of civil servants have been flown here from West Pakistan and their task is to keep a watch on the East Pakistani civil servants.

I don't know what is the situation outside Dacca, but I heard that Chittagong and Cox's Bazar have been bombed by army planes and shelled by the navy. It seems that some fighting is also going on in the north-east. But unless India intervenes openly, the Bangla Desh forces would have no chance against the well-trained and highly disciplined soldiers of Tikka Khan. With Mujib in goal the Awami Leaguers have no recognised leader and rivalries and jealousies among his colleagues have already started. It will take a very, very long time before the two-halves of Pakistan can forget what happened here. I hope it will not take too long because with every day that passes, the chances of an understanding are reduced.

It would be easier for the East Pakistanis to talk to West Pakistani political leaders. But the West Pakistani political leaders themselves have no say in politics—not for the time being at least. Furthermore, we have the Indians who are sure to claim they must be made a party to a settlement. With Mujib in goal they are talking on his behalf and gradually claiming to express the wishes of the people of East Pakistan. The danger is that if we do not start a dialogue between political leaders of the two wings we will soon have the army and the Indians talking on behalf of both wings and perhaps, plunging us into a war.

(iii) Major-General Rao Farman Ali

Major-General Farman Ali is a tall, intelligent and soft-spoken soldier who looks after the civilian side of the martial law in East Pakistan. He knows the region well and his

understanding of the political situation is unusual for a professional soldier. This is what he had to say:

The first thing I want to make clear is that, had we not been convinced that Mujib and his party would divide Pakistan, we would not have taken the action we took. We did not want political power. We proved our goodwill by having the election and allowing all parties freedom of action. Had we wanted power, we would not have held the election and would have stayed in without further fuss. You see that we have broken the Awami League. This we could have done earlier when Mujib was still weak. I have known Mujib for a long time. I was in contact with him almost every day during the past two years. He turned out to be a weak man who could be hypocritical. He told us one thing in private and said exactly the opposite in public. He thought he had taken all of us in the army for a ride, misinterpreting our desire for a political settlement as a sign of weakness.

There is no glory for the army in undertaking such an operation. We would not have done it had we not been forced to by Mujib. The man was unfit for leadership since he was a megalomaniac who could be driven to do all sorts of things under fear of losing his popularity. He was a rabble-rouser who, through a series of coincidences, was forced to assume the task of a statesman.

Let me tell you something I have told no one before, apart from my superiors. A day before the trouble broke out and the army had to take action, I called on Mujib with a last plea for a settlement. He said he was "finished as a man". He said that he was convinced he would be killed in any case.

"If I do what you want," he told me, "the students will kill me. If I do what they want you will kill me. In any case I am finished."

Now, was this the way a statesman should think at the most decisive moment in his career? I am not a politician and don't wish to sound like one. But how can anyone with such a degree of cowardice be in politics? We were prepared to accept anything from Mujib short of secession. He did not want to stand up to his secessionists because he wanted to remain popular with everyone. How is that possible?

You say he might have been forced to take the secessionist role. Well, but a man who is induced to commit a murder by others still remains the main agent of the murder.

Now let us turn to other topics. The Indians say that we used the period of negotiations between the President and Mujib as a cover for flying green troops into East Pakistan from the West. I give you my word of honour as a soldier that not a single man was flown in during that period. We started bringing in reinforcements only after midnight of the night of March 25. Our officers were being massacred and the civilian population was being attacked, and for the first few days we could not cope with the situation. Had we wanted to bring in reinforcements, we could have done it much earlier.

Also, the Indians say that over 35,000 West Pakistani troops have been killed by the rebels during the past few months. I assure you that if this figure were true, there would not be a single West Pakistani soldier left in East Pakistan right now.

They also say that a million people have been killed and eight million others have become refugees. This means nine million people out of a population of 70 million. How can anyone believe this? There are thousands of displaced persons but I assure you that the number of all people killed throughout East Pakistan during the disturbances does not exceed 10,000 of whom at least half were non-Bengali minorities massacred by Mujib's storm-troopers and rebellious elements of the regular army in East Pakistan. In Dacca, for example, no more than 365 people were killed on both sides. Now, the Indians speak of 10,000 or even half a million. I would like you to do something. Walk in Dacca and ask anyone you like how many people have been killed. Chances are that he would say several thousands or more. But ask him if he himself knows of anyone who has been killed or whether or not he has lost any of his own relatives and friends. I am certain he would say 'No' to your second question.

The same is true of the displaced persons. Some 10 per cent of Dacca's population have gone into hiding in the country-side. So you see shops closed and some houses abandoned. But I am sure you will see that the Indian accounts have been exaggerated. As far as the administration

is concerned, we are rapidly getting back to normal. Some 90 per cent of the Bengali civil servants have returned to their posts. Some of them had gone into hiding being afraid that they might be massacred as quislings by Mujib's supporters. As soon as the army moves into a locality they come forward and resume their tasks. We are soldiers, and we don't wish to intervene in the civil service. Our sole task is to reinforce the administration whenever necessary, using the army's superior organisation, discipline and resources at its disposal. Beyond this, I have nothing to do with the administration. What do I know about the economy or agriculture and things like that ?

Thousands of displaced persons are returning home and we are helping them regain their villages and resume normal economic activity. We have over 20 reception centres on the border, which you will see, and we have a crash programme for the rehabilitation of all displaced persons, whether inside East Pakistan or coming from India. Those who are returning home from India have to use untracked routes since the Indian army has been ordered to stop East Pakistanis from returning home. As you know, a general amnesty has been ordered by the President and everyone can return home with complete safety.

(iv) **Former Secessionist A.A.**

A.A. is a Bihari who lives in Dacca. I first met him in Dacca last February when he told me he believed that East Pakistan should be turned into a separate state. At that time he was bitterly opposed to Mujib because the Awami League leader was apparently against secession. When trouble broke out in East Pakistan, A.A. went into hiding. He has just returned to the city, benefiting from the general amnesty declared by the President. His account of the turmoil :

I have not yet recovered from the shock. As a Bihari, I risked being murdered by the Awami Leaguers. As a known secessionist, I was a legitimate prey for the zealous soldiers. Yet, you see that I am still alive. Alive but frightened, I had advocated secession because I thought the situation in Pakistan, which is divided by over 1,000 miles of Indian territory, was untenable. We were refugees when secession came and

had high hopes in Pakistan. Our hopes were dashed by the dictatorship, and the fact that East Pakistan was plundered by a few capitalists from both wings.

In West Pakistan, no one was aware of our plight until Ayub was overthrown. Ayub was the man responsible for what the two wings are suffering today. A nation is not given many chances in history. Pakistan, as a nation, lost most of its chances under Ayub.

I don't know about the atrocities on both sides. We, the Biharis, in any case, suffered in the hands of Mujib's Liberation Army. They butchered many of my relatives and friends and I know that there were Indian troops and West Bengali volunteers in their ranks. Now I know that had Bangla Desh come into being, as I had wished, I would not have been alive today.

The people are suffering from psychosis. They have been caught unawares by the tragedy. They feel defeated, bitter, cowed and utterly helpless. The worst thing is not the death of relatives and friends. It is the death of hope. And these people, as you know, have been living almost exclusively on hope. The people need kindness, generosity and their spiritual wounds should be healed if they are not to suffer a complete collapse. It no longer matters who was responsible. What matters is to save an entire people from psychological collapse.

I don't believe Mujib was a true secessionist. He was a plaything of political cross-currents. Had he really wanted Bangla Desh he should have taken over as Prime Minister of Pakistan sending the soldiers back to the barracks and gradually paved the way for an independent state. East Pakistan does not have the personnel, the administrative organisation nor the military backbone that an independent state needs in these circumstances. Had Mujib declared the birth of Bangla Desh and succeeded, he would have had to rely on India for day-to-day survival. In that case East Bengal would have become an Indian colony. The alternative would have been united Bengal, including both East Pakistan and Indian-held West Bengal. There is a big movement for this in West Bengal. In that case, however, India and West Pakistan would have joined hands in crushing the united Bangla Desh.

It no longer matters whether East Pakistan should remain with West Pakistan or not. In any case, that is the best course under the circumstances. What matters is that East Pakistan should remain alive.

(v) **Tahseen Muhammad**

Tahseen Muhammad is a PIA steward who has been flying "more than what is good for me" between Karachi and Dacca during the past few months. This is what he told me :

When the crisis came, we were flying to and fro like mad—taking troops to Dacca and returning with plane-loads of maimed and wounded women and children. Most of the victims were Biharis. We have flown thousands of them. Many had their eyes knifed out of their sockets by the Bangla Desh forces. There were women with breasts cut, children who almost went insane after witnessing the beheading of their fathers.

I have seen enough horrible scenes to keep me awake at night for the rest of my life. We were children when Jinnah launched the Pakistan movement. We were afraid of being massacred by the Hindus in India and never thought we would see the day Muslim would butcher Muslim in a fashion worthy of Hitler.

KAYHAN (International), Aug. 1, 1971
THE DECLINE AND FALL OF SHEIKH MUJIB
By Amir Taheri

In the middle of Dacca's fashionable Dhanmandi district there is a pale yellow three-storied building which is said to be haunted by ghosts in the dark nights of the monsoon. Most of the windows are broken and there are bullet marks on almost every wall. The wild ivy pursues its green conquest of the mud-brick walls encouraged by generous rain. Amid the thick leaves of the old trees there are soaked little slogans saying : Joy Bangla (Long Live Bengal).

People who pass from the street on which the houses are situated make sure to keep their distance from this badly designed semi-Georgian house that has already been shrouded into legend.

The house belongs to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the goaled leader of the Awami League whose meteoric rise to popularity and his equally sudden decline and fall have become something of a dream mixed with hints of nightmare to the millions of people who were stirred up to hysteria by his fiery speeches over no more than a year.

In the modest room that was Mujib's house we found a pile of letters still unopened—invitations to weddings, requests for this or that and page after page of, for us, undecipherable Bengali scribblings. All the letters had arrived at the house in mid-March but the Sheikh, who was arrested on March 26, had no time to open them.

On his desk we found Sir Ivor Jennings' "Constitutional Problems of Pakistan" dedicated to Mujib by his teacher, one Zuberi. Inside the cover we read: "Politics leads to power but knowledge is power, too." And Mujib has added a few sentences saying this was the book he read every time he was thrown into prison. This time, however, he did not have time to take the book with him.

In other rooms there are books and records scattered everywhere as well as withered flowers, coloured-bulbs, black flags and party slogans. The whole house has the aspect of a place where a big party has been wrecked by the intervention of vengeful gate-crashers.

The Sheikh must have been quite a desperate man during the last 48 hours of his freedom. With a thumping electoral victory behind him and with no opponents in sight in East Pakistan he had obviously found himself the Messiah of 75 million desperately poor East Pakistanis.

Throughout the complex game of manoeuvres and counter-manoeuvres that followed the election—the first in Pakistan's history—the Sheikh had conducted himself with masterful composure and always contriving to appear to the wronged side.

He had managed to advocate his Six-points with complete freedom despite the fact that the programme was a truly revolutionary one which, if implemented, would have led to

a virtual end to central authority in East Pakistan. At the same time he had succeeded in holding his party together, and the Awami League which he headed with a spectrum of various political ideas and socio-economic interests. Inside his central committee there were sworn pro-Mao Communists, anti-Communist landlords and rich merchants, nihilistic student rebels, pompous middleclass lawyers and rustic jute-growers from the dark hinterland.

The election had been held for the formation of a constituent assembly that would write a constitution for Pakistan. But in the last days of March the Sheikh, no doubt, egged on by his extremist lieutenants, asked the military government to agree to an immediate transfer of power to the assembly.

In doing so he was encouraged by numerous West Pakistani leaders including Qayyum Khan of the Muslim League and other lesser figures such as Air-Marshal Asghar Khan, Nasrullah and Mian Mumtaz Daulatana. So he thought that his call for an immediate end of martial law and the hand over of power to the assembly would be backed by the West Pakistanis as well. The only man he did not count on was Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Chairman of the West Pakistani People's Party—the second largest group in the assembly that never met.

Mujib accused Bhutto of having caused the postponement of the assembly, and when a fresh date was given by the President, Mujib was no longer interested in constitutional niceties alone. He wanted power then and there. Looking around him he found the military chiefs weak and undecided and thought Yahya Khan would baulk at the thought of plunging the nation into, what Mujib was convinced, would be a long and bitter civil war.

To this was added his demand for an enquiry into shooting incidents that had claimed over 300 lives in East Pakistan in the second week of March. What, in effect he asked for, was a trial of the generals responsible for martial law in East Pakistan.

There was a remarkable degree of naivete in his moves. He wanted the generals to hand over power to him and agree to be tried by him. At the sametime he had no definite strategy for imposing his will upon them.

By mid-March his "Hartal" (strike) movement was in full swing although he was still negotiating with President Yahya. He talked as if he had already seized power and made it clear that from then on he would be dictating his terms to the military government as well as the assembly members elected in the west wing.

Beyond saying he would put the generals on trial, Mujib had no well-defined policy to offer as the basis for the activities of the government he proposed to form. He did not say whether this would be a government for East Pakistan alone or whether he was aiming at creating a government for both wings. The first alternative is more plausible since the Awami League would not have been able to completely ignore Bhutto had it had a chance to form a national government.

Negotiations between Mujib and Yahya Khan dragged on and both sides gradually grew impatient. Yahya wanted Mujib to join the assembly as majority leader, help draft a constitution and then head a civilian government. The only conditions were that end his "hartal", withdraw the demand for the trial of the army chiefs and drop his insistence on forming two separate assemblies—one for each wing of the divided country.

Mujib was adamant. He argued that the martial law government had lost its authority in East Pakistan and that he accepted nothing less than carte blanche. He told Yahya Khan that his party had won a free election and thus was entitled to power. What the military government did in West Pakistan was of no concern to him.

It was at this point that the talks broke down. Neither side knew what the next move would be. The breakdown of the talks was hailed by the extremists in Awami League as a "victory". They began organising group of armed volunteers and asked Bengali soldiers and policemen to rebel against their West Pakistani officers.

Yahya Khan, on the other hand, was not given a chance to weigh the results of his nightmarish encounter with the Sheikh. He saw his army on the verge of disintegration and his government about to lose control not only in East Pakistan but also in the West Wing. For, had Mujib succeeded in doing what he had set about to do, the military government would have collapsed in West Pakistan also. Finding

himself in a hopeless situation the President chose military action as the sole way out of the crisis.

By doing so he also solved a problem that must have been plaguing Sheikh Mujibur Rahman—viz. what to do next? For Mujib, having successfully pulled off his "hartal," still had to eliminate the army from the scene and establish some form of order in the turbulent country at the mercy of "goondas" (thugs) and Naxalite rebels. He would have been completely unable to achieve the double objective and since he had no more cards to play he decided to allow events to take their "natural" course. Havings forced the army into a head-on collision with the Awami League, the Sheikh did not have the ghost of a policy designed to save his party from destruction.

He was urged by his militant juniors to declare the independence of "Bangla Desh" and to immediately invite military aid from India. He hesitated. He was not sure India would be able or willing to embark upon a war with Pakistan on his behalf. He knew there would be violent repercussions in West Bengal—a development the Indians do not welcome. Somehow he was expecting some kind of a miracle that would save him from having his back to the wall.

His middle-class supporters were gradually leaving the band-wagon. They had joined it in the hope of getting a share in East Pakistan's trade, then entirely in the hands of the West Pakistanis. They had certainly not backed the Sheikh in order to be plunged into a civil war that would mean their own economic ruin as well.

All the properties strata of the society were by then frightened and chose "law and order", withdrawing their support from Mujib although not saying so openly. Mujib had asked them to starve the army. But supplies continued to flow into the barracks. Notables began to have secret meetings with the military chiefs.

The extremist students were also abandoning Mujib for entirely different reasons. They wanted him to do a Mao while he was trying to do a Gandhi. In the last fateful hours of his career the Sheikh was left with the unreliable support only of the unorganised mass of the Bengali peasantry. The pace of events was too quick for him and soon his authority was superseded by that of men like Tajuddin Ahmed, the

Awami League's secessionist secretary-general and student leaders like Noor-e-Alam Siddiqui and A.S.M. Abdur Rob.

On the other side the initiative was in the hands of Lt.-General Tikka Khan reputed to be the toughest officer to come out of the Punjab for a generation.

There was no room on such a stage for romantic, indecisive and utterly confused political actors such as Mujibur Rahman. From then on the only valid dialogue was that spoken in the language of bullets.

The Awami League extremists hastily announced the birth of their independent "Bangla Desh" while Mujibur Rahman sat in his house in Dhanmandi ready to be arrested by the army.

Mujib was seized and flown to Karachi in the early hours of March 26. On the plane he slept for just over an hour. He did not talk to anyone. At Karachi airport he had to change planes for Quetta, the capital of Pakistani Baluchistan. He was taken into the VIP lounge and offered English tea. He asked for black coffee. Then two policemen posed behind him and a snap-shot was taken.

Few people know of Mujib's whereabouts at present. He is being moved from one prison to another. Last month he went on a hunger strike but he agreed to eat when his wife and children were taken to see him. During the past few weeks he has been writing feverishly. No one knows what he is writing but some people say he is preparing his defence for the time he goes on trial.

There are rumours that he has gone insane and is making unintelligible "speeches" for several hours a day. But I have first hand information that this is not true. The Awami League leader is quite-sound and has neither been tortured nor treated with disrespect. In fact, he is being treated as if he were a VIP spending sometime behind bars.

A group of lawyers and military chiefs are preparing the case against him. He is expected to be put on trial within the next few weeks on a charge of high treason. The maximum penalty would be death by firing squad.

Few people in West Pakistan believe Mujib will be executed. No political executions have taken place in the history of Pakistan so far and there are strong reasons to

believe that this tradition will not be broken. Most West Pakistanis were convinced Mujib was a secessionist and involved in a conspiracy planned by the Indian government. In East Pakistan it is still practically impossible to assess Mujib's present standing. Few people like to talk about him, and those who do, are former members of his party who now accuse him of having led his people into a trap.

Meanwhile, Mujib still has to give his version of Pakistan's bloody nightmare. When his trial opens in Islamabad he will be facing the judgment not only of a court-martial but also of history.

'KAHYAN' International, August 2, 1971

THE LOOMING SHADOW OF A HUNGRY GIANT.

By Amir Taheri.

Noontime is kebab-time in Dacca's riverside district. There are about 20 kiosks made of tin and tree-trunks which specialise in making a mixture of flour and minced intestines of sheep that passes for "kebab". To the teeming crowds of the district this curious mixture represents a wholesome meal. There are thousands of fishermen, vendors, fortune-tellers, crap-shooters, lay-abouts, boatmen, beggars, ruined peasants wandering in the town and sundry other semi-naked walking skeletons who mob the "kebab-shops" at lunch-time.

The whole meal costs one-quarter of a rupee (about 2.5 rials) and yet most of the crowd who gather to watch the grilling of the coveted meal cannot afford the treat. Out of every 10 by-standers at the kebab-shops only one or two can afford the meal. They eat with pleasure and look as if they have just secured a chunk of paradise. The rest of the crowd look on in envy mixed with wonder.

"Too poor to be true", the head of the East Pakistani water and power board—a charming Bengali—described his land when briefing us on the region's problems. "We have the highest population density in the world and the lowest per capita income", he said with a hurt smile. There are

some 75 million people occupying an area of 55,000 square miles. The population of the region will be over 100 million before the current decade is over.

East Pakistan is a flat land "like the centre of a saucer" that "attracts all the floodwater from the uplands of India and Nepal". Every year it is practically submerged by raging floods while the monsoon rains are heaviest in this eternally green and seemingly eternally poor land.

The water and power department chief told us that some $ 5 billion is needed to create flood control and irrigation network if the present standard of living—already the lowest in the world—is to be maintained over the next two decades. This is equal to nearly one-third of Pakistan's total GNP each year. The national government simply does not have the resources to meet the challenge.

In most areas of the province conditions of near famine have always prevailed. The recent disturbances—causing much destruction of capital, food and a huge loss of labour, have made the situation graver still. There is every possibility that the bulk of the jute harvest—the region's chief cash crop and Pakistan's biggest single source of foreign exchange —will be lost next year. Many fields are abandoned and few people feel inclined to set about their normal work as long as conditions of uncertainty continue in the land.

The crisis has also hit the export of pineapples. India has banned Pakistani aircraft from overflying its territory and thus it is not economical to export pineapples by air.

To make matters worse, acts of sabotage disrupt vital communication links making every single commercial transaction something like a military operation. In the remotest regions of the province such as Bogra and Sylhet rebels are still active, terrorising the peasant population and preventing them from tilling the land and tending the farms. Millions of peasants have been displaced and most of the government plans for flood control and irrigation have become nothing but paper dreams.

Even under the British this part of the empire—then serving as the backward and exploited hinterland of Calcutta —was proverbial for its poverty. In those days Malthusian "corrective measures" such as famine and cholera would make sure that the population did not grow beyond the means

of the soil. Nearly 20 years of efforts by Pakistan—helped by half a dozen other countries—has kept the people of the region alive, but on the frontiers of semi-starvation. No progress beyond this has been possible due to the region's centuries of accumulated backwardness and poverty and an unjust system of economic organisation that constantly disfavoured East Pakistan.

This was perhaps, only natural within a free-enterprise economic system. In such a system investment is motivated by a desire for profit and enterprises in West Pakistan—that was at least 200 years ahead of the east wing—were obviously more profitable. This led to a vicious circle. The more West Pakistan developed at the expense of East Pakistan the less attractive investment became in the latter.

For nearly three years now the central authorities as well as increasingly large section of public opinion in West Pakistan have been aware of this. But these were years of uncertainty and turmoil, and as a result, nothing positive could be done to save East Pakistan from further decline.

The West Pakistanis are now waiting for complete peace to return to the east wing before they launch their "crusade to save the east" from further suffering. They admit that they should have thought about this 20 years ago and blame one corrupt and inefficient central government after another for the present tragic situation.

Whether complete peace will return to East Pakistan in the foreseeable future remains any one's guess. Over 35,000 guerrillas are being trained by India. A large number of the East Pakistanis who escaped into West Bengal during the past few months are unlikely to return home except as rebels and saboteurs. Powerful disruptive forces are at work and West Pakistan's resources to meet the Herculean challenge of saving the east wing from the four horsemen of the Apocalypse are strictly limited.

The military authorities say that as soon as India stops its "campaign to divide Pakistan" they will be able to make a real breakthrough in the east wing.

Some West Pakistani leaders, notably People's Party Chairman Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, believe that the restoration of civilian rule would do the trick. Bhutto says the situation in East Pakistan can be "put right" in just five years provided

a civilian central government would take over from the military soon.

A small but significant number of West Pakistani intellectuals believe that the battle against poverty and disruptive forces is already lost. They see the recent disturbances in East Pakistan as "the beginning of the disintegration of the entire sub-continent."

They believe that the military will be unable to hold on to the east wing and that the loss of the province would be immediately followed by the secession of West Bengal from India. They point to the fact that West Bengal has been turbulent and under virtual military occupation for the past decade. The catalyst for such a disintegration, they claim, would be a war between India and Pakistan which would "break into pieces the mosaic of nations that covers the sub-continent".

Neither India nor Pakistan have yet recovered from their losses in the 1965 war. But there are forces on both sides which advocate armed confrontation as "the final solution".

The Indians seem to believe that by smashing Pakistan into pieces—using East Pakistan as the springboard—they would save their own unity. There are Pakistanis who would be prepared to meet the challenge in the hope of pulling down India as well as they themselves into the abyss.

Here, the policies of the Big Powers, have an important role to play. West is anxious to keep India as a buffer state between its own zone of influence and that of People's China. Peking, on the other hand, is also interested in keeping the buffer with Pakistan as a "corrective force" against Indian illusions.

But the fate of the sub-continent is not being determined in either Washington or Peking. It is being decided in the two-halves of Bengal both of which are poor enough to think they would have nothing to lose but their chains when the final conflagration erupts in their midst.

There are quite a few thinking East Pakistanis who believe that the disintegration of the sub-continent would bring about "massacres unheard of in the annals of mankind". Millions of people lost their lives during partition and a fresh partition leading to the emergence, perhaps, of 20 different

nation states in the sub-continent would be accompanied by far more widespread atrocities and genocide.

The tragic events of the past few months in East Pakistan have led to a strengthening of militaristic tendencies in both India and Pakistan. The military chiefs, hungry for honour and desirous of "action for the boys" as they are beginning to wield increasingly effective influence over the policies of both Islamabad and New Delhi. Both countries have military heads that are too heavy for their frail bodies. There are nearly two million men under arms in the sub-continent and many more millions could be armed, no matter how crudely, if and when a confrontation comes.

When the Naxalite rebellion was in full swing in West Bengal the Pakistanis did all to help the insurgents in the hope of weakening India. Rebels found shelter in East Pakistan and the bulk of the arms they received from China passed through Dinajpur and Rajshahi. The result was that West Bengal became virtually ungovernable. Now the Indians are taking their revenge by sheltering East Pakistani rebels, training and arming them and throwing full political support behind them. Both sides might prove to have succeeded in releasing the Bengali giant that was captive in two interlinked bottles.

Yahya Khan's government might well be the last Pakistani government capable of making a fair deal with India. But it is precisely this government that New Delhi hopes to overthrow. At the same time Mrs. Gandhi's government risks becoming a captive of the military chiefs if the present situation deteriorates. In trying to stab Pakistan in the back India might well be committing harakiri at the same time.

But these are all considerations of a strategic nature. What is of immediate importance is to save East Pakistan from famine and West Bengal from economic collapse under the pressure of the refugees. The Americans have apparently promised massive financial and food aid to Pakistan. The first doses are expected to be administered before the end of the summer. But much more is needed. The situation in East Pakistan and West Bengal must be treated as one of vital importance to the world as a whole. For the seeds of a gargantuan Asian tragedy are being sown in this arena of human struggle against poverty and starvation.

NEWSWEEK, August 2, 1972

BENGAL : THE MURDER OF A PEOPLE

It seemed a routine enough request. Assembling the young men of the village of Haluaghat in East Pakistan, a Pakistan Army major informed them that his wounded soldiers urgently needed blood. Would they be donors ? The young men lay down on makeshift cots, needles were inserted in their veins—and then slowly the blood was drained from their bodies until they died.

Govinda Chandra Mandal forgets who told him first, but when he heard that an amnesty had been pledged to all refugees, he immediately set off on the long walk home. With his two teenage daughters by his side, Chandra Mandal trudged through monsoon-drenched swamp lands and past burned-out villages. When he neared his scrap of land, soldiers stopped him. As he watched in helpless anguish, his daughters were raped—again and again and again.

He was about 2 years old, and his mother was still in her teens. They sat on ground made muddy by the steady drizzle of the summer rains. The baby's stomach was grotesquely distended, his feet swollen, his arm no thicker than a man's finger. His mother tried to coax him to eat some rice and dried fish. Finally, the baby mouthed the food feebly, wheezed and died.

Few people seem more alien to Westerners than the Pakistanis. When thousands of them perish in various natural disasters that regularly plague their country, the newspaper accounts of their suffering have a curious unreality. And yet today, no one can escape the nightmare vision of Pakistan's civil war : a quarter of a million Bengalis dead, another 6 million or more driven into desperate exile as the result of a deliberate effort to terrorise an entire people. It is as if a city the size of Bonn (Germany), had been obliterated and the population of London made suddenly homeless. Even in a world jaded by war and atrocity, suffering on that scale still comes as a sickening shock.

And there is more to it than that. Far more horrifying than the prospect that Pakistan may destroy itself are the signs that its brutal civil war could spark yet another, wider conflict between Moslem Pakistan and its arch enemy Hindu India. Last week, Pakistan's President Mohammed Yahya Khan angrily declared that if India expands its surreptitious support of Bangla Desh, as the secessionist Bengal nation is known, "I shall declare a general war—and let the world take note the world would have to." For should that happen, Pakistan's ally, China, and India's ally, Russia, would be hard-pressed to avoid involvement. And the United States could be faced with the dangerous necessity to choose sides.

Already, the realities of geopolitics have confronted the U.S. with the thankless task of choosing between strategic and humanitarian considerations. Straining to preserve its influence with Yahya's government, yet anxious to help the suffering Bengalis, America has succeeded only in embroiling itself in a bitter controversy. Last week that controversy was intensified when Sen. Edward Kennedy disclosed the contents of confidential messages from U.S. diplomats in Pakistan. "SPECTRE OF FAMINE HANGS OVER EAST PAKISTAN", read one cable. "PROSPECTS FOR AVERTING WIDESPREAD HUNGER, SUFFERING AND PERHAPS STARVATION NOT REPEAT NOT GOOD". Kennedy's clear implication was that the Nixon Administration was seeking to cover up the magnitude of the Bengali tragedy. And, not content with that, he went on to intimate that the U.S. had plans to send police teams to East Pakistan to help Yahya's Punjabi soldiers suppress Bengali resistance.

Two Divergent Cultures

Such a cold-blooded move, should it ever come to pass, would ensnare the U.S. in one of the most intractable racial and cultural conflicts of modern times. Physically and politically, Pakistan is unique among the world's nations. Its populated eastern region is separated from the western region by more than 1000 miles of Indian territory. It is a nation of two radically divergent cultures, of two totally different peoples who have despised each other through history. The lighter-skinned, aggressive Punjabis of West Pakistan scorn the Bengalis, whose rich rice land and lucrative jute crops have

paid Pakistan's bills ever since the founding of the country in 1947. BENGALIS regard the Punjabis as barbarians—and, to make matters worse, oppressive barbarians who have monopolised Pakistan's government and army. Snapped one Bengali leader, "We have never been anything but a colony of the west".

Chafing after decades of subjugation, the Bengalis responded with frenzied enthusiasm when their fiery, leonine hero, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, led them to the polls last December in Pakistan's free elections after twelve years of military rule. Spurred on by the flamboyant oratory of Mujib (as his worshipful followers call him), the Bengalis voted in such numbers that Mujib and his Awami League won an absolute majority of seats in the country's new National Assembly. Suddenly it seemed that Bengal's time had come. But as it turned out, Mujib's platform of economic and diplomatic autonomy for the east was too great a threat to be endured by Punjabi leaders. Unwilling to play second fiddle to Mujib, West Pakistan's most popular politician, the left-leaning Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, refused to participate in the new Parliament. And in the end President Yahya abruptly postponed the opening of the assembly indefinitely.

Plans For Slaughter

Within hours of Yahya's decree, Mujib proclaimed a general strike in East Pakistan. To this day, Pakistani officials maintain that Yahya personally appealed to Mujib for a compromise that would heal the nation's wounds. But most observers believe that Yahya had other plans all the while. Weeks before the Yahya-Mujib meeting actually took place, the President and his right-hand man, Lt.-Gen. Tikka Khan, were already mapping out plans for Mujib's arrest, the dissolution of the Awami League and the slaughter of nationalists.

Known as "the bomber of Baluchistan" for his indiscriminate use of air and artillery strikes in crushing a local tribal revolt in 1965, Tikka Khan, apparently persuaded Yahya to buy time for the army to build up its strength in Bengal. Accordingly, Yahya made his bid for discussions with Mujib. And while the two leaders talked—and Bengalis as well as

the world at large looked for a compromise that might save Pakistan—the army pulled off a logistics coup. Flying the long over-water route around southern India with Boeing 707s commandeered from Pakistan International Airlines, the army doubled its troops strength in Bengal to 60,000 men. When Tikka gave the word that all was ready, Yahya flew out of Dacca. And that very night, the bomber of Baluchistan unleashed his troops.

Under instructions to strike brutally on the theory that a savage surprise attack would snuff out resistance quickly, the army obeyed its orders with a vengeance. Tanks crashed through the streets of East Pakistan's capital of Dacca, blasting indiscriminately at men and buildings. With cold ferocity, Punjabi soldiers machine-gunned clusters of citizens, while others set fire to slum 'busthes' throughout the city. Soon, the city was littered with bodies and the campus of Dacca University—a hot-bed of secessionism—was a bloody shambles.

Throughout that blood-drenched night and in the days and weeks that followed, the carnage continued. And the massacres were not limited to Dacca but were carried on throughout the country-side as well. After a desperate visit to his native village on the Indian border, a sobbing Bengali journalist told how the land had been devastated: "I passed through a dozen villages which had been burned and deserted, with bodies everywhere being eaten by crows. The smell! The horror! I kept praying it would not be like that at my village. But it was. The village was just a mass of charred rubble and corpses. My wife and child were missing. There was just one old lady alive and she could no longer talk. She just sat on the ground, shaking and moaning."

With the passing of time, the magnitude of the slaughter has diminished, but there has been no lessening in the brutality of the Pakistani army. Last week, NEWSWEEK'S Loren Jenkins, who was in Dacca the night that Gen. Tikka Khan's troops launched their campaign of murder, cabled the following report on conditions in East Pakistan now:

Four months after the first flush of bloodletting, East Pakistan still lives in fear. But instead of being the cowering, grovelling fear that the army sought to instill, it is a sullen fear tinged with quiet defiance and hate. It is a fear based

on the appreciation of a very harsh reality, not a fear that marks people of broken spirit. Walking along a Dacca street recently, I met a journalist I had known before. Our eyes met and he nodded, but he appeared embarrassed. Glancing nervously all around, he muttered, "My God, my God, civilized man cannot describe the horror that has been done". An hour later another friend explained : "We have been ordered not to talk to foreign journalists. We are scared. We live in terror of the mid-night knock on the door. So many people have been killed. So many more have disappeared. And more vanish every night".

One who vanished in the night was Mujib, who is now reportedly held in prison in the western garrison town of Mianwali. A hero before, Mujib has now become a martyr. For all his conspicuous faults, he has become the symbol of Bengali patriotism. Yet Yahya, almost boastfully, told a recent visitor, "My generals are pushing for a military trial for Mujib and for his execution. I have agreed and the trial will be held soon". No policy could be more short-sighted or more likely to harden Bengali resistance. As one western diplomat told me, "Yahya is simply out of his mind. He still does not even understand what his army had done. He thinks they can kill off a couple of hundred thousand people, try Mujib for treason, force a return to order and all will be forgotten. This is utter nonsense. These people will not forget".

Guerrilla Resistance

Indeed, the minds of Bengalis are emblazoned with the memories of these months of terror. Despite the terror, signs of resistance to the army creep up everywhere. In Dacca, street urchins hawking the local papers slip mimeographed communiques from the Government-in-exile into the newspapers. On ferry boats in the countryside, where all passengers are under the watchful eyes of the army, strangers slide up and whisper of massacres or point out areas in the dense Madhupur Jungle where the "Mukti Bahini" or Liberation Army, is hiding. All over the country, the resistance is rapidly taking on the earmarks of a classic guerrilla war. And East Pakistan is ideal guerrilla terrain reminiscent

of South Vietnam's Mekong Delta—a labyrinth of sunken paddies, jute fields and banana groves.

That the Mukti Bahini are capitalizing on their few assets is brought home daily. They have cut the key railroad to Dacca from the port of Chittagong and have also severed the parallel road. More than 60 per cent of the interior food supplies move over those routes and there is virtually no prospect of restoring them until peace is also restored. The rebel's recent coup in blowing up three power stations in Dacca has under-scored the point that no city or village is safe from their campaign to bring the economy to a halt. Most important, however, is the fact that the rebels now seem to be winning what every guerrilla needs—the support of the populace. Two months ago, villagers in Noakhali province pleaded with the Mukti Bahini not to blow up a bridge because it would bring army retaliation. Last week, those same villagers sought out the guerrillas and asked them to destroy the bridge.

To be sure, the guerrillas are no match for the federal army. While they have rallied some 20,000 Bengali fighters to their cause (and expect another 10,000 recruits to join them next month after clandestine training in India), the inadequately armed rebels still face 60,000 well-equipped professional soldiers. And despite its covert aid, India has cautiously hesitated to .recognise the Bangla Desh government-in-exile. One reason for this restraint is the genuine and costly problem the New Delhi government faces in caring for the 6 million Bengali refugees now in India. NEWSWEEK'S Tony Clifton who has reported the anguish of the refugees since the beginning of Pakistan's civil war, filed this report last week from Calcutta:

The strain on India has become almost unbearable. The refugees are still swarming across the border in hordes ranging as high as 40,000 a day, and as P.N. Luthra, the former Indian Army Officer in charge of the refugee program told me, "I am now responsible for the care of a small country". It is costing India $ 3 million a day to feed, clothe, house and provide vital medicine for the Bengalis, a financial drain that is crippling to the already marginal Indian economy. Worse yet, lack of available funds has meant a shortage of virtually everything in the refugee camps—and the inevitable result has been suffering, disease and death.

To Luthra, the only conceivable resolution of the tragedy is for the world to put the utmost pressure on Pakistan to stop the carnage so the Bengalis will feel safe in going home.

Yet for all their suffering, the Bengalis themselves maintain their stoicism. It is the monsoon season in India, but the monsoon here is not like the great monsoons of Hollywood. Instead of roaring and thundering, the rain falls softly and steadily, dribbling through the canvas tents to soak the refugees, turn earth floors to mud and flood inadequate drains. But the refugees stand patiently calf deep in stagnant water, eager to tell me their stories so I can tell others. I collect a notebook of horror—rape and murder and kidnapping. They tell me how they saw their children stabbed, their husbands or brothers executed, their wives collapse with fatigue or sickness. The stories are all new, and all the same. And I remember Luthra's plaintive question. "How can we think the human race is evolving to a higher level when it lets this go on ?"

As the military repression and the guerrilla sabotage goes on, it poses ever-increasing threat to the future of Pakistan itself. Already, experts say, the country's economy is a shambles. Since the fighting began, exports have plummeted, the vital jute crops that are Pakistan's biggest foreign exchange earner rot unharvested, and the vast consumer market of the eastern region on which West Pakistan's factories lived has vanished along with the refugees and rebels. "In short, Yahya's government faces the genuine danger of bankruptcy," warns a Western economist in Dacca. Equally genuine is the danger of mass starvation. "Unless something is done soon," the same economist adds, "there is going to be a famine here that will make all the prior suffering look like nothing." "But in the end, the greatest threat to Pakistan is the flaring hatred that Yahya's army has spawned. "Pakistan died in March" says a Karachi editor. "The only way this land can be held together is by the bayonet and the torch. But that is not unity, that is slavery. There can never be one nation in the future, only two enemies".

Threat Of War

The area already has enemies enough. In recent weeks, Islamabad and New Delhi have traded insults and accusations

at a dizzying rate and there is a real possibility that angry words may escalate into war. Indeed, some Indians even claim to see an economic motive for going to war ; according to the Institute for Strategic Studies in New Delhi, it would be cheaper for India to fight Pakistan than to continue to care for millions of Bengali refugees. "It had not come to that yet" sighed one U.S. official last week. "But India has considered a military thrust apparently very seriously." And Pakistan, too, has weighed the use of force against its neighbour in retaliation for India's support of the Mukti Bahini.

The gravest danger from any such hostilities is the possibility that Communist China and Russia would become involved. Chinese Premier, Chou-En Lai has denounced "Indian expansionists" and has promised Yahya that Peking would support the Pakistanis "in their just struggle to safeguard their state sovereignty". And Chou could hardly translate his pledge into action—by ordering Chinese troops stationed along the Indian border to provoke skirmishes, or by infiltrating "advisers" to reinforce the Pakistani army. Pakistan has some promises from Peking to take military action of its own should war begin, warns a U.S. diplomat and India is trying to extract some counterbalancing promise of military aid from Russia. That could lead to catastrophe.

An Agonizing Choice

Any such involvement by the two Communist superpowers would confront the United States with a cruel dilemma. Pakistan, despite the undeniable brutality of its policy toward the Bengalis, is a long-standing American ally and a country that the U.S. is desperately trying to keep out of Peking's sphere of influence. At the same time, India is Asia's biggest nation with a democratic tradition dating back to Gandhi and Nehru and, as such, occupies a special position in the U.S. portfolio of friendly nations. To choose between the two would be agonizing. One U.S. analyst of foreign affairs, drafting a scenario for U.S. actions should a subcontinent war break out, remarked : "Our first move obviously would be to try to play the peacemaker, much as Russia did at Tashkent in 1966 during the last Indo-Pakistan war. If that failed, the U.S. might be able to sit it out, so long as

Russia and China were involved only as suppliers of the two combatants. But if they got directly engaged, it would then be almost impossible for Washington to remain aloof. We would have to gamble on one side or the other, give them at least the logistical aid they needed and hope we had chosen the winner."

Rhetoric and contingency plans aside, none of the world's three great powers wants to embroil itself militarily in the Indian subcontinent. But that does not rule out the possibility that they could become involved against their will. In the meantime, the future of Pakistan and, possibly, the lives of millions of other Asian, depends on Yahya Khan. And at the moment the Pakistani President remains determined not to relent—ignoring the fact that he may be creating out of nationalist guerrillas the core of a potential Communist insurgency. "The tragedy of Pakistan really is that Yahya is oblivious to what he is doing, oblivious to the cost of the actions", a diplomat in Islamabad remarked sombrely last week. "There is only one man alive who could save Pakistan now, and that is Mujib. Yahya vows that Mujib must die. But the day he hangs by the neck, Pakistan will hang with him".

The Politics Of Relief

If some American are still only vaguely aware of the plight of the Bengali refugees, Beatles George Harrison and Ringo Starr intend to pound the message home this week. In their first public appearance together since the famous rock group split up, George and Ringo plan a benefit performance at New York's Madison Square Garden, with all proceeds to go to homeless Bengali children. And theirs is only one of many efforts—by the International Rescue Committee, Catholic Relief Services, UNICEF and Americans for Childrens Relief among others—designed to stir the U.S. conscience over the genocidal civil war in Pakistan.

Many private citizens now involved in Bengali relief are veterans of similar operations during the Biafran tragedy two years ago. And most are dismayed that, unlike the rescue of Biafran children, which aroused such widespread sympathy, world reaction to the Bengali refugee emergency

seems almost apathetic by comparison. Ironically, the sheer magnitude of the suffering in East Pakistan may, in itself, be partly to blame. "Bengali refugees must now form the largest group of displaced persons in the world", said Dr. Daniel L. Weiner, who recently returned from a fact-finding tour for the IRC. "It is a problem that has to be dealt with on an international scale, no private effort can possibly handle this load. Private agencies can only alleviate some aspects of the mess. But the very size of the problem seems to paralyze people—it's not so much a lack of interest as a feeling of helplessness."

Busy

To the extent that any organised international effort has been mounted to alleviate Bengal's misery, the U.S. government can take credit. Washington has committed $ 70.5 million to the aid of East Pakistani refugees in India as compared with $ 11 million from the Soviet Union. More than 360,000 tons of U.S. food-grains are in the transport pipeline to East Pakistan. For the present according to U.S. specialists, the threat of mass starvation in the region is not due to any lack of supplies but to poor distribution. Though the U.S. has given Pakistan $ 2 million to charter relief ships, the Pakistan Army has used most of them so far to transport troops and ammunition. "They are so damned busy trying to re-establish their control over East Pakistan," snapped a State Department aide, "that they haven't looked beyond their own noses."

Such complaints suggest that Washington has had little success in influencing President Mohammed Yahya Khan to moderate his policies. Yet the Nixon Administration has justified its aid to the Yahya regime mainly on the ground that such support will give Washington leverage over Islamabad. In the face of mounting domestic criticisms of that policy, however, the U.S. has recently begun to waffle. In requesting a total of $ 131.5 million in aid to Pakistan next year, the State Department recently promised Congress that the money would be held back until Pakistan begins to minister to its homeless millions. But sceptical observers recalled that the U.S. slapped a similar ban on military aid to Pakistan last April—only to have it emerge later on that Pakistani freighters were still hauling U.S. supplied ammunition and spare parts, ordered before the ban took effect.

back to Karachi. And last week Senator Stuart Symington charged that the ban was still full of holes. The Administration said Symington, was guilty of "semantics, ambiguous statements on the public records without clarification and no effort to present the actual facts until pressed to do so."

Strategic

Privately, U.S. diplomats concede that, above all else, Washington is trying to maintain good relations with Pakistan out of strategic considerations. One diplomat warned against the end of an American influence on Pakistan. "Our influence has vanished" he argued, "the area could become a playground for the Soviet Union and China". Added a colleague with startling bluntness: "We are more interested in stability than morality at the moment.....Right now the chance for stability, slim as it is, seems to lie with Yahya".

Yet, the price of a cold geopolitical approach, to the problem may itself prove to be unacceptable in the end. For one thing, Washington's calculated reluctance to bring added pressures on Islamabad by openly cutting off aid put it at odds with the World Bank and the other members of an eleven-nation consortium, all of whom have deferred development programs in Pakistan until the government in Islamabad works out a "political accommodation" with the eastern region. (Even the World Bank, however, has not been able to escape the controversy swirling around Pakistan, after World Bank President Robert McNamara tried to suppress a critical report drafted by a team of investigators who recently visited Pakistan. The New York Times got hold of the documents and splashed it on its front page). Subsequently McNamara sent a letter to the Pakistani Government apologizing for the news leak.

Moreover, Washington's equivocation has already enraged India, where most officials are convinced that Yahya could not continue his policy of repression without outside help. "Supply of arms to Pakistan by any country in the present context amounts to condoning genocide in Bangla Desh," charges India's Foreign Minister Swaran Singh. "It could have an impact on Indo-US bilateral relations as well". Thus rightly or wrongly, the Administration's pragmatic stand on

the Pakistani question has promoted an impression of official U.S. indifference to the human agony of a strife-torn-land—an impression that is at odds with the traditional image of a concerned and compassionate America.

TIME Magazine, August 2, 1971

PAKISTAN : THE RAVAGING OF GOLDEN BENGAL.

Over the rivers and down the highways and along countless jungle paths, the population of East Pakistan continues to haemorrhage into India ; an endless unorganised flow of refugees with a few tin kettles, cardboard boxes and ragged clothes piled on their heads, carrying their sick children and their old. They pad along barefooted, with the mud sucking at their heels in the wet parts. They are silent, except for a child whimpering now and then, but their faces tell the story. Many are sick and covered with sores. Others have cholera, and when they die by the roadside there is no one to bury them. The Hindus, when they can, put a hot coal in the mouths of their dead or singe the body in lieu of cremation. The dogs, the vultures and the crows do the rest. As the refugees pass the rotting corpses, some put pieces of cloth over their noses.

The column pushing into India never ends, day or night. It has been four months since civil war broke out between East and West Pakistan, and the refugees still pour in. No one can count them precisely, but Indian officials, by projecting camp registrations, calculate that they came at the rate of 50,000 a day. Last week the estimated total passed the 7,500,000 mark. Should widespread famine hit East Pakistan, as now seems likely, India fears that the number may double before the exodus ends.

Hundreds of thousands of these are still wandering about the countryside without food and shelter. Near the border, some have taken over schools to sleep in ; others stay with villagers or sleep out in the fields and under the trees. Most are shepherded into refugee camps where they are given ration cards for food and housed in makeshift sheds of bamboo

covered with thatched or plastic roofing. Though no one is actually starving in the camps, food is in short supply, particularly powdered milk and baby food.

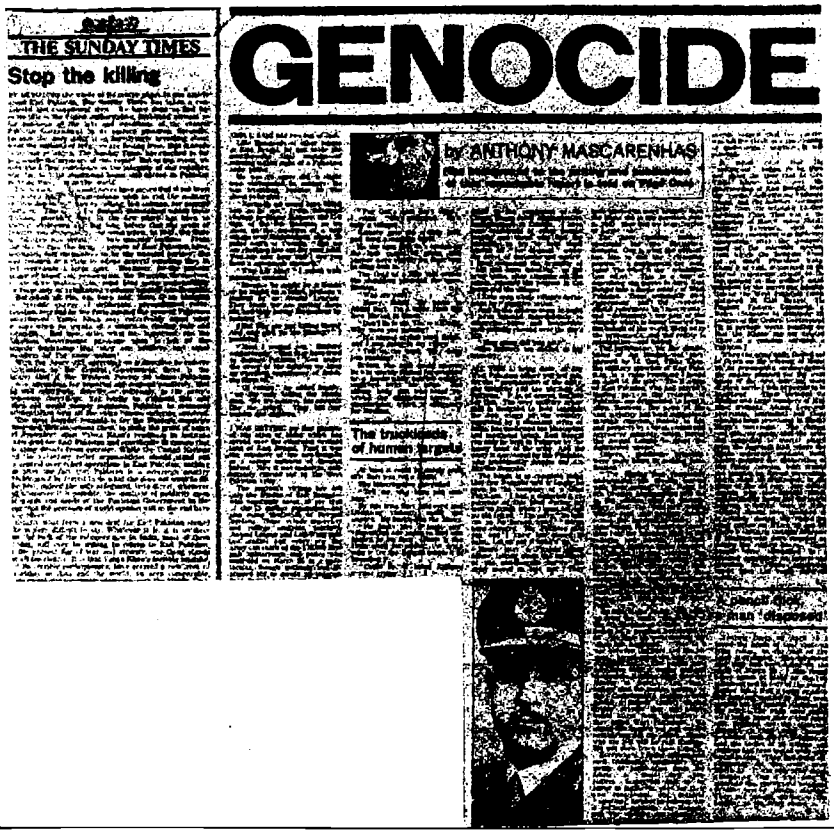
No More Tears

Life has been made even more miserable for the refugees by the monsoon rains, that have turned many camps into lagoons. Reports Dr. Mathis Bromberger, a German physician working at a camp outside Calcutta, "There were thousands of people standing out in the open here all night in the rain. Women with babies in their arms. They could not lie down because the water came up to their knees in places. There was not enough shelter, and in the morning there were always many sick and dying of pneumonia. We could not get our serious cholera cases to the hospital. And there was no one to take away the dead. They just lay around on the ground or in the water. High pressure syringes have speeded vaccination and reduced the cholera threat, but camp health officials have already counted about 5,000 dead, and an estimated 35,000 have been stricken by the convulsive vomitting and diarrhoea, that accompany the disease. Now officials fear that pneumonia, diphtheria and tuberculosis will also begin to exact a toll among the weakened refugees. Says one doctor : The people are not even crying any more".

Perhaps because what they flee from is even worse. Each has his own horror story of rape, murder or other atrocity committed by the Pakistani army in its effort to crush the Bengali independence movement. One couple tells how soldiers took their two grown-up sons outside the house, bayoneted them in the stomach and refused to allow anyone to go near the bleeding boys, who died hours later. Another woman says that when the soldiers came to her door, she hid her children in her bed ; but seeing them beneath the blanket the soldiers opened fire, killing two and wounding another. According to one report from the Press Trust of India (P.T.I), 50 refugees recently fled into a jute field near the Indian border when they heard a Pakistani army patrol approaching. "Suddenly a six month old child in its mother's lap started crying," said the P.T.I. report. "Failing to make the child silent and apprehending that the refugees might be attacked, the woman throttled the infant to death".



Yahya's bull's-eye shot on children in Dacca.
Photo : Amiya Tarafdar.



THE SUNDAY TIMES

Stop the killing

GENOCIDE

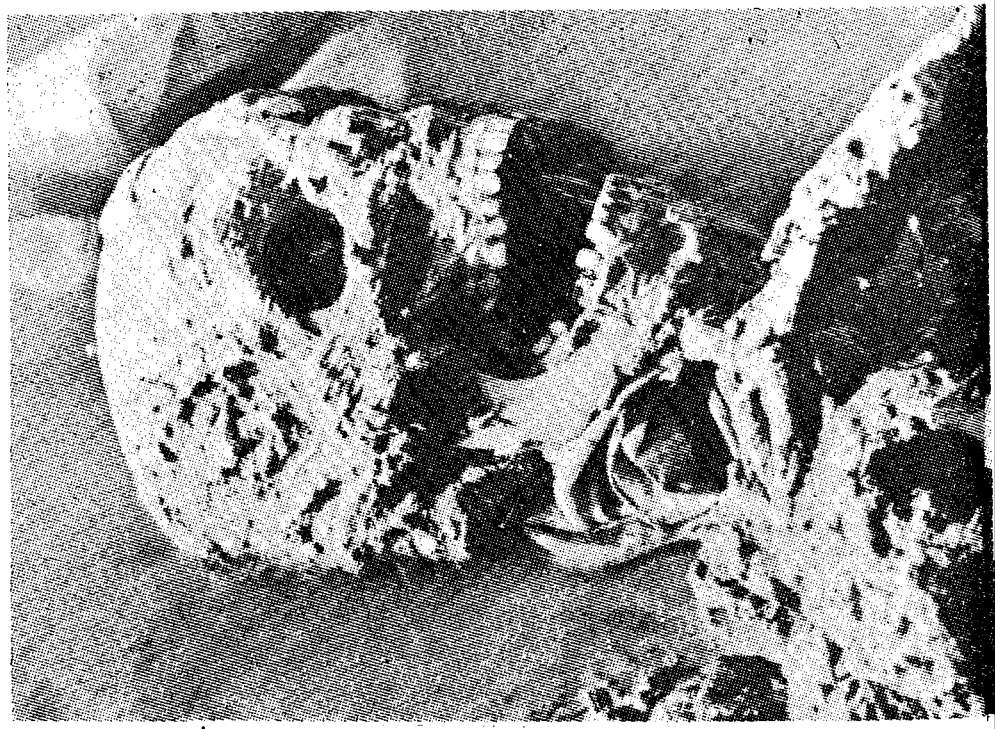
by ANTHONY MASCARENHAS

The blacklands of human targets

Sunday Times : 13-6-71.

WHY THE REFUGEES FLED: the first full eye-witness report of the horror when the troops went into E.Pakistan





A mass grave unearthed in Mirpur.
Courtesy : Bangladesh Observer.



Inauguration of Bangladesh stamp in London.
Huriyat 30-7-71.



Inauguration and unfurling of Bangladesh Flag in Hyde Park, London.
Courtesy : Dainik Bangla.

Cordon of Fire

The evidence of the bloodbath is all over East Pakistan. Whole sections of cities lie in ruins from shelling and aerial attacks. In Khalishpur, the northern suburb of Khulna, naked children and haggard women scavenge the rubble where their homes and shops once stood. Stretches of Chittagong's Hizari Lane and Maulana Showkat Ali Road have been wiped out. The central bazar in Jessore is reduced to twisted masses of corrugated tin and shattered walls. Kushtia a city of 40,000 now looks, as a World Bank team, reported, "like the morning after a nuclear attack". In Dacca, where soldiers set sections of the Old City ablaze with flame-throwers and then machine-gunned thousands as they tried to escape the cordon of fire, nearly 25 blocks have been bulldozed clear, leaving open areas set incongruously amid jam-packed slums. For the benefit of foreign visitors, the army has patched up many shell holes in the walls of Dacca University, where hundreds of students were killed. But many signs remain. The tank-blasted Rajarbagh Police Barracks, where nearly 1,000 surrounded Bengali cops fought to the last, is still in ruins.

Millions of acres have been abandoned. Much of the vital jute export crop, due for harvest now, lies rotting in the fields ; little of that already harvested is able to reach the mills. Only a small part of this year's tea crop is salvagable. More than 300,000 tons of imported grain sits in the clogged ports of Chittagong and Chalna. Food markets are still operating in Dacca and other cities, but rice prices have risen 20% in four months.

Fear and deep sullen hatred are everywhere evident among Bengalis. Few will talk to reporters in public, but letters telling of atrocities and destroyed villages are stuck in journalists' mailboxes at Dacca's Hotel Intercontinental. In the privacy of his home one night, a senior Bengali bureaucrat declared : "This will be bitter, protracted struggle, may be worse than Vietnam. But we will win in the end."

Estimates of the death toll in the army crackdown range from 200,000 all the way up to a million. The lower figure is more widely accepted, but the number may never be known. For one thing, countless corpses have been dumped in rivers, wells and mass graves. For another, statistics from East

Pakistan are even more unreliable than statistics from most other places. That is inevitable in a place where before the refugee exodus began, 78 million people, 80% of them illiterate, were packed into an area no larger than Florida.

Harsh Reprisals

The Hindus, who account for three-fourths of the refugees and a majority of the dead, have borne the brunt of the Moslem military's hatred. Even now, Moslem soldiers in East Pakistan will snatch away a man's lungi (sarong) to see if he is circumcised, obligatory for Moslems ; if he is not, it usually means death. Others are simply rounded up and shot. Commented one high U.S. official last week : "It is the most incredible, calculated thing since the days of the Nazis in Poland".

In recent weeks, resistance has steadily mounted. The army response has been a pattern of harsh reprisals for guerrilla hit-and-run forays, sabotage and assassination of collaborators. But the Mukti Bahini, the Bengali liberation forces, have blasted hundreds of bridges and culverts, paralyzing road and rail traffic. The main thrust of the guerrilla movement is coming from across the Indian border, where the Bangla Desh (Bengal Nation) provisional government has undertaken a massive recruitment and training program. Pakistani President Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan last week charged that there were 24 such camps within India, and India no longer even bothers to deny the fact that locals and some border units are giving assistance to the rebels.

Half of the Mukti Bahini's reported 50,000 fighters came from the East Bengal Regiment, the paramilitary East Pakistan Rifles, and the Bengali Police, who defected in the early days of the fighting. Young recruits, many of them students, are being trained to blend in with the peasants, who feed them, and serve as lookouts, scouts and hit-and-run saboteurs. Twice the guerrillas have knocked out power in Dacca, and they have kept the Dacca-Chittagong railway line severed for weeks. Wherever possible they raise the green, red and gold Bangla Desh flag. They claim to have killed 25,000 Pakistani troops, though the figure may well be closer to 2,500 plus 10,000 wounded (according to a reliable Western

estimate). Resistance fighters already control the countryside at night and much of it in the daytime.

Only time and the test of fire will show whether or not the Mukti Bahini's leaders can forge them into a disciplined guerrilla force. The present commander-in-chief is a retired colonel named A. G. Osmani, a member of the East Pakistan Awami League. But many feel that before the conflict is over, the present moderate leadership will give way to more radical men. So far the conflict is non-ideological. But that could change "if the democracies do not put pressure on the Pakistanis to resolve this question in the near future", says a Bangla Desh official, "I fear for the consequences. If the fight for liberation is prolonged too long, the democratic elements will be eliminated and the Communists will prevail. Up till now the Communists do not have a strong position. But if we fail to deliver the goods to our people, they will sweep us away".

By no means have all the reprisals been the work of the army. Bengalis also massacred some 500 suspected collaborators, such as members of the rightwing religious Jammat-e-Islami and other minor parties. The Biharis, non-Bengali Moslems who fled from India to Pakistan after partition in 1947, were favourite and sometimes innocent targets. Suspected sympathisers have been hacked to death in their beds or even beheaded by guerrillas as a warning to other villagers. More ominous is the growing confrontation along the 1,300 mile border, where many of the Pakistani army's 70,000 troops are trying to seal off raids by rebels based in India. With Indian Jawans facing them on the other side, a stray shot could start a new Indo-Pakistani war and on a much more devastating scale than their 17 days clash over Kashmir in 1965.

Embroiled in a developing if still disorganised guerrilla war, Pakistan faces even bleaker prospects as the conflict spreads. By now, in fact, chances of ever recovering voluntary national unity seem nil. But to Yahya Khan and the other tough West Pakistani generals who rule the world's fifth largest nation, an East-West parting is out of the question. For the sake of Pakistan's unity, Yahya declared last month, "no sacrifice is too great". The unity he envisions, however, might well leave East Pakistan a cringing colony. In an effort to stamp out Bengali culture, even street names

are being changed. Shankhari Bazar Road in Dacca is now called Tikka Khan Road after the hard-as-nails commander who now rules East Pakistan under martial law.

Honeyed Smile

The proud Bengalis are unlikely to give in. A warm and friendly but volatile people whose twin passions are politics and poetry, they have nurtured a gentle and distinctive culture of their own. Conversation—adda—is the favourite pastime and it is carried on endlessly under the banyan trees in the villages or in the coffee-houses of Dacca.

Typically, Bangla Desh chose as its national anthem not a revolutionary song but a poem by the Nobel prize-winning Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore's "Golden Bengal"

...come spring, O mother mine!
Your mango groves are heady
with fragrance,
The air intoxicates like wine,
Come autumn, O mother mine!
I see the honeyed smile of your
harvest-laden fields.

It is indeed a land of unexpectedly lush and verdant beauty, whose emerald rice and jute fields stretching over the Ganges Delta as far as the eye can see belie the savage misfortunes that have befallen its people. The soil is so rich it sprouts vegetation at the drop of a seed, yet that has not prevented Bengal from becoming a festering wound of poverty. Nature can be as brutal as it is bountiful, lashing the land with vicious cyclones and flooding it annually with the spillover from the Ganges and the Brahmaputra rivers.

Improbable Wedding

Even in less troubled times, Pakistanis were prone to observe that the only bonds between the diverse and distant wings of their Moslem nation were the Islamic faith and Pakistan International Airlines. Sharing neither borders nor cultures, separated by 1,100 miles of Indian territory, Pakistan is an improbable wedding of the

Middle East and Southeast Asia. The tall, lightskinned Punjabis, Pathans, Baluchis and Sindhis of West Pakistan are descendants of the Aryans who swept into the sub-continent in the second millennium B.C. East Pakistan's slight, dark Bengalis are more closely related to the Dravidian people they subjugated. The Westerners, who eat wheat and meat, speak Urdu, which is written in Arabic but is a synthesis of Persian and Hindi. The Easterners eat rice and fish, and speak Bengali, a singsong language of Indo-Aryan origin.

The East also has a much larger Hindu minority than the West. 10 million out of a population of 78 million compared with 800,000 Hindus out of a population of 58 million in the West. In British India days, the present West Pakistan formed the frontier of the empire, and the British trained the energetic Punjabis and Pathans as soldiers. They scorn the lungi, a southeast Asian-style sarong worn by the Bengalis. "In the East," a West Pakistani saying has it, "the men wear the skirts and the women the pants. In the West, things are as they should be".

Twenty Families

The West Pakistanis were also determined to "wear the pants" as far as running the country was concerned. Once, the Bengalis were proud to belong to Pakistan (an Urdu word meaning "land of the pure"). Like the Moslems from the West, they had been resentful of the dominance of the more numerous Hindus in India before partition. In 1940, Pakistan's founding father, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, called for a separate Islamic state. India hoped to prevent the split, but in self-determination elections in 1947, five predominantly Moslem provinces, including East Bengal, voted to break away. The result was a geographical curiosity and, as it sadly proved, a political absurdity.

Instead of bringing peace, independence and prosperity, partition brought horrible massacres, with Hindus killing Moslems and Moslems killing Hindus. Shortly before his assassination in 1948, Mahatma Gandhi undertook what proved to be his last fast to halt the bloodshed. "All the quarrels of the Hindus and the Mohammedans," he said, "have arisen from each wanting to force the other to his view".

From the beginning, the East got the short end of the bargain in Pakistan. Though it has only one-sixth of the country's total land area, the East contains well over half the population (about 136 million), and in early years contributed as much as 70% of the foreign-exchange earnings. But West Pakistan regularly devours three-quarters of all foreign aid and 60% of export earnings. With the Punjabi-Pathan elite in control for two decades, East Pakistan has been left a deprived agricultural backwater. Before the civil war, Bengalis held only 15% of government jobs and accounted for only 5% of the 275,000 man army. Twenty multimillionaire families, nearly all from the West, still control a shockingly disproportionate amount of the country's wealth (by an official study, two-thirds of the nation's industry and four-fifths of its banking and insurance assets). Per capita income is miserably low throughout Pakistan, but in the West ($48) it is more than half against that in the East ($30).

To cap this long line of grievances came the devastating cyclone that roared in off the Bay of Bengal last November, claiming some 500,000 lives. The callousness of West toward East was never more shockingly apparent. Yahya waited 13 days before visiting the disaster scene, which some observers described as "a second Hiroshima". The Pakistani navy never bothered to search for victims. Aid distribution was lethargic where it existed at all, tons of grain remained stockpiled in warehouses while Pakistani army helicopters sat on their pads in the West.

Supreme Sacrifice

Three weeks later, Pakistan held its first national elections since becoming a nation 23 years before, the object was to choose a constituent assembly that would draft a new charter for the nation, and then would continue to sit as a national assembly. The East Pakistanis thronged the polls and gave an overwhelming endorsement to Sheikh Mujibur. ("Mujib") Rahman, 51, the fiery head of the party known as the Awami League and a longtime spokesman for Eastern autonomy (he spent nearly ten years in jail for urging that Bengalis be given greater control of their destiny). Mujib's Awami League captured 167 of the 169 seats allotted to the East in the 313-member national assembly, giving it a clear

majority. The victory meant that Mujib, as the leader of the majority party, would be Prime Minister of all Pakistan.

It was something that Yahya had simply not anticipated. He and his fellow generals expected that Mujib would capture no more than 60% of the East Pakistani seats, and that smaller parties in the East would form a coalition with West Pakistani parties, leaving the real power in Islamabad. Mujib feared some sort of doublecross: "If the polls are frustrated," he declared in a statement that proved horribly prophetic, "the people of East Pakistan will owe it to the million who have died in the cyclone to make the supreme sacrifice of another million lives, if need be, so that we can live as a free people."

With the constitutional assembly scheduled to convene in March, Yahya began a covert troop buildup, flying soldiers dressed in civilian clothes to the East at night. Then he postponed the assembly, explaining that it could not meet until he could determine precisely how much power and autonomy Mujib wanted for the East. Mujib had not espoused full independence, but a loosened semblance of national unity under which each wing would control its own taxation, trade and foreign aid. To Yahya and the generals, that was unacceptable. On March 25, Yahya broke off the meetings he had been holding and flew back to Islamabad. Five hours later, soldiers using howitzers, tanks, and rockets launched troop attacks in half a dozen sections of Dacca. The war was on. Swiftly, Yahya outlawed the Awami League and ordered the armed forces "to do their duty". Scores of Awami politicians were seized, including Mujib, who now awaits trial in remote Sahiwal, 125 miles southwest of Islamabad, on charges of treason; the trial expected to begin in August, could lead to the death penalty.

Out of touch

In the months since open conflict erupted, nothing has softened Yahya's stand. In fact, in the face of talk about protracted fighting, mounting dangers of war with India, and an already enormous cost in human suffering, the general has only stiffened. Should India step up its aid to the guerrillas, he warned last week, "I shall declare a general war—and let

the world take note of it." Should the countries that have been funnelling $350 million a year in economic aid into Pakistan put on too much pressure, he also warned, he will do without it.

He has already lost some. After touring East Pakistan last month, a special World Bank mission recommended to its eleven nation consortium that further aid be withheld pending a "political accommodation". World Bank President Robert McNamara classified the report on the grounds that it might worsen an already difficult diplomatic situation. The report spoke bluntly of widespread fear of the Pakistani army and devastation on a scale reminiscent of World War II. It described Kushtia, which was 90% destroyed, as "the My Lai of the West Pakistani army". A middle level World Bank official leaked the study, and last week McNamara sent Yahya an apology, in his letter he reportedly said that he found the report "biased and provocative". Yet one Bank official insisted that though it was later revised and modified somewhat, its thrust remained the same. "We just had to put it on a less passionate basis" he said. "But it did not reduce its impact".

U.S. policy has been murky, to say the least. The Nixon Administration continues to oppose a complete cut-off of U.S. aid to Pakistan. The White House has asked Congress for $118 million in economic assistance for Pakistan for fiscal year 1971-72, which it says will be held in abeyance. Despite intense pressure from within his official family, as well as from Congress, Nixon argues that a total cut-off might drive Pakistan closer to China, which has been one of its principal suppliers of military aid since 1965, and also destroy whatever leverage the U.S. has in the situation. In the light of Henry Kissinger's trip to China, however, it now seems clear that there may have been another motive for the administration's soft-pedalling. Pakistan, of course, was Kissinger's secret bridge to China.

Nonetheless, criticism has been mounting, particularly in the Senate, with its abundance of Democratic Presidential aspirants. Senator Edward M. Kennedy charged that the World Bank report, together with a State Department survey predicting a famine of appalling proportions, "made a mockery of the Administration's policy." Two weeks ago, the House of Foreign Affairs Committee recommended cutting off

both military and economic aid to Pakistan. The bill still must clear the House and the Senate, but its chances of passage are considered good.

Since 1952, when massive aid began, Pakistan has received $ 4.3 billion from the U.S. in economic assistance. In addition the U.S. equipped and maintained the Pakistani armed forces up until 1965. Then, because of the Pakistani-Indian War, arms sales were dropped. Last October the Administration resumed military aid on a "one-time basis". After the East Pakistan conflict erupted, it was announced that arms shipments would be suspended; but when three ships were discovered to be carrying U.S. military equipment to Pakistan any way, the State Department explained that it intended only to honour licences already issued. Over the years, it is estimated that close to $1 billion has been provided for military assistance alone.

The U.S. may well have to do some re-thinking of its Pakistan Policy. In a recent interview with Time, former French Culture Minister Andre Malraux warned that before long, "you in the United States will have a big new problem in Asia : Bengal. It will be like Vietnam, except that there are 78 million Bengalees (in Pakistan). The Bengalees are nationalists, not Maoists. But the present serene attitude of the U.S. will have to change".

Condoning genocide

India is particularly incensed over the present U.S. policy and Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi strongly protested to Henry Kissinger about U.S. military shipments when he visited New Delhi this month. The supply of arms by any country to Pakistan, Foreign Minister Swaran Singh charged last week, "amounts to condonation of genocide". Mrs. Gandhi is faced both with mounting pressure for military action, and an awesome cost that could set her own economy back for many years. India is feeding the refugees for a mere 1.10 rupees per person per day, but even that amounts to more than $1,000,000 a day. The first six months alone, Indian officials say, will cost $ 400 million. Contributions pledged by other countries (the U.S. leads with $73 million) equal barely one-third of that—and much of that money has not yet actually been paid.

Still, it would hardly, be cheaper to launch a war and get it over with, as some high-level Indians openly suggest. Hours after Indian troops marched into East Pakistan, Pakistani tanks and troops could be expected to roll over India's western borders. Moreover, fighting could spread over the entire sub-continent. For all of India's commitment "to Bangla Desh, democracy and those who are fighting for their rights", in the words of Mrs. Gandhi, New Delhi is not at all interested in taking on the burden of East Bengal's economic problems. The only answer, as New Delhi sees it, is a political solution that would enable refugees to return to their homes.

The impetus for that could conceivably come from West Pakistanis. It is still far from certain that they are really determined to go the distance in a prolonged war. Thus far, the war has been officially misrepresented to the people of the west as a mere "operation" against "miscreants". Tight censorship allows no foreign publications containing stories about the conflict to enter the country. Even so, as more and more soldiers return home badly maimed, and as young officers are brought back in coffins (enlisted men are buried in the East), opposition could mount. The pinch is already being felt economically, and there have been massive layoffs in industries unable to obtain raw materials for lack of foreign exchange.

Immense suffering

Meanwhile, the food supply in East Pakistan dwindles, and there is no prospect that enough will be harvested or imported to avert mass starvation. August is normally a big harvest month, but un-told acres went unplanted in April, when the fighting was at its height. Already, peasants along the rainswept roads show the gaunt faces, vacant stares, pencil limbs and distended stomachs of malnutrition. Millions of Bengalis have begun roaming the countryside in quest of food. In some hard-hit locals, people have been seen eating roots and dogs. The threat of starvation will drive many more into India. Unless a relief programme of heroic proportions is quickly launched, countless millions may die in the next few months. Yahya's regime is not about to sponsor such an effort. His latest federal budget, adopted last week,

allocates $ 6 out of every $ 10 to the West, not the East ; in fact, the level of funds for Bengal is the lowest in five years. The U.S. still fretful about driving Yahya deeper into Peking's embrace is seen unlikely to provide the impetus for such a programme.

Tagore once wrote :
Man's body is so small,
His strength of suffering
so immense.

but in golden Bengal how much strength can man summon before the small body is crushed ?

Good Soldier Yahya Khan

PAKISTAN'S General Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan had been settled in President's House in Rawalpindi for a full year before he finally agreed to hold a press conference for foreign newsmen. When he entered the packed drawing room where the first conference was held 14 months ago, he immediately let loose a few choice expletives about the hot TV lights. A trembling technician quickly switched them off. Then Yahya started in on the journalists. "Don't play politics with me," he snapped in his characteristically gruff bass, "because I'll play politics with you."

Yahya, 54, runs his country pretty much the same way—with impatience, ill-disguised contempt for bungling civilians, and a cultivated air of resentment about having let himself get involved in the whole messy business in the first place. When Ayub Khan yielded the presidency to him two years ago, Yahya switched from Khaki to dark business suits, which he still wears with obvious discomfort. As if to emphasise his longing for the barracks, he occasionally carries a swagger stick and misses no chance to play the simple, straight-talking soldier.

ON THE SLOW FLOW OF CYCLONE AID TO EAST PAKISTAN LAST WINTER : "My government is not made up of angels."

ON PAKISTAN'S FISCAL PROBLEMS : "I inherited a bad economy and I'm going to pass it on."

ON HIS MISSION : "I'll be damned if I'll see Pakistan divided."

ON HIS MANDATE: "The people did not bring me to power. I came myself."

Few Pakistanis knew anything about Yahya Khan when he was vaulted into the presidency two years ago. The stock, bushy-browed Pathan had been army chief of staff since 1966. Half a dozen high-ranking generals were deeply disturbed about the avuncular Ayub Khan's willingness to permit a return of parliamentary democracy, despite his own comment that politicians behaved like "five cats tied by their tails." When a weary Ayub stepped aside in March 1969 in the wake of strike and student riots that focused on wages, educational reform and a host of other issues, the generals eagerly imposed martial law. In his first speech as President, Yahya delighted his military sponsors by declaring that the country was at "the edge of an abyss." What really bothered the generals was that the country might be on the verge of a return to genuine civilian rule, posing grave dangers to the army's power and perks.

Yahya raised the minimum industrial wage by 30% to 26% a month, brought in several civilian ministers when soldiers proved unfit for the jobs, and sought to reduce official venality. He had no intention of allowing a sudden return to full civilian rule, yet he did not seem to hanker for power—despite the Pakistani saying that "a general galloping upon a stallion is slow to dismount." Eventually, he decided to press ahead not only with an election but a new constitution, even though, as he later said, "some of my countrymen don't like the idea." They say, "What the hell's going on? This will lead to chaos."

Yahya, however, had misread the political tempers. When East Pakistan's charismatic Sheikh Mujibur Rahman won his stunning majority in the December election, the hardliners began telling Yahya, "I told you so". Six leading generals—including General Abdul Hamid Khan, an old chum of Yahya who is the current army chief of staff, and Tikka ("Red Hot") Khan, the cold-blooded commander in East Pakistan—helped persuade Yahya to deal harshly with the East's "treachery".

Yahya (pronounced Ya-hee-uh) Khan claims direct descent from warrior nobles who fought in the elite armies of Nadir Shah, the Persian adventurer who conquered Delhi in the 19th

century. With his 'pukka sahib' manner, Yahya seems strictly Sandhurst, though he learned his trade not in England but at the British-run Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun. During World War II, he fought in the British Indian army in North Africa and Italy. After partition, like most of the sub-continent's best soldiers, he opted to become a Pakistani (India, the saying goes, got all the bureaucrats). He was an Ayub protege from the start, and his star rose swiftly.

Following Moslem practice, Yahya keeps his family—wife, Fakhra, and two married children—well out of the public eye. His only known interest, outside of the military is birds—all varieties. He keeps Australian parrots around President's House, and in a specially built pool, a number of cranes and swans. He remains fussy as ever about his wavy expanse of thick, white-streaked black hair ("My strength lies in it—like Samson's").

Westerners who know him well describe Yahya as a reasonable man but stubborn, proud and discipline-minded. He began a drive on corruption last year by summoning senior civil servants and telling them that they were all "a bunch of thieves." The bureaucracy rose in protest, and Yahya soon gave up the effort. But he shows no sign of yielding with the Bengalis, whom he reportedly calls 'machchar'—Urdu for mosquitoes.

"Yahya is not a brutal man," says an American acquaintance. "He is a good soldier. But he has been blinded by his intense nationalism, and his belief that the honour and security of his country have been betrayed." There is a case for Yahya's Lincolnesque attempt to hold the Pakistani house together; there is none for his methods. He might have succeeded had he tried to accommodate the East's justifiable demands for greater autonomy. But his tough crackdown virtually guarantees that the country's two halves, which have precious little in common, will never be successfully reunited.

HERALD TRIBUNE (Paris), August 9, 1971

A BENGALI VIEWPOINT: YAHYA FACES BITTER CHOICE

By Rafique Anwar
from Saigon

[Mr. Anwar is a Bengali journalist in Southeast Asia. He wrote this article in reply to one published by the International Herald Tribune on July 19.]

Whether seen from London, Paris, Washington, Moscow or Peking, the revolt in East Bengal has now acquired the magnitude of an international issue that has seized the attention of the world powers.

Having just invited a delegation of the World Islamic Secretariate to visit Dacca on a government-conducted tour, even the government of Pakistan finds it difficult to pretend that it is an internal matter that can be settled in the way similar to the post-Sukarno regime in Indonesia dealt with the so-called Communist threat through the massacre of unarmed civilians.

The danger of a war between India and Pakistan, Islamabad's threat to quit the British Commonwealth, the World Bank's decision to suspend economic aid to the regime of President Mohammad Yahya Khan and the rumblings in the U.S. Senate are only some of the ramifications of the growing internationalisation of what was once conveniently dubbed by West Pakistan as "our internal problem" or, to quote a British newspaper report, "as an untidy situation that our generals will take care of."

Gen. Yahya has thus lost the first round in the diplomatic battle over Bangla Desh. But as Islamabad's predicament becomes more and more serious, a handful of apologists and defenders of the Pakistan authorities are obliged to become more active in performing the unenviable task of rationalising and even justifying their government's policy toward East Bengal.

Sure of Attitude

Writing in the Herald Tribune of July 19, one such apologist, I. Gondal, has given his own version of the events leading to the army crackdown on March 25, before offering his conclusion that "the people of East Pakistan were never and are not now for an independent Bangla Desh."

Mr. Gondal's verdict must have come as a kind of revelation to many Bengali residents in Paris, one of whom was good enough to send the clipping of the article to me in Saigon, where I have been reporting on another war of national liberation for a Japanese newspaper. Hence the delay in replying to Mr. Gondal.

It seems that this part-time writer and a full-time member of the Pakistan Foreign Service is more certain of what the people of East Bengal want than even his president who is still forced to keep as many as five divisions of his army to maintain law and order in the war-torn province, station West Pakistani civil servants to operate some kind of an administration, bring in even labourers and porters from the Western wing to clear the cargo in the port of Chittagong and fail to run the train service between Dacca and Chittagong for fear of sabotage.

If the people of East Bengal reject the concept of Bangla Desh, the situation would have been surely entirely different, even if there are a few miscreants and anti-state elements around.

There is, of course, a simple way of putting Mr. Gondal's claim to a test. Let Yahya Khan release Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other Awami League Leaders, withdraw his troops from East Bengal and permit an internationally supervised referendum on the question of independence to be held in the province.

And let him, for God's sake, accept the verdict. I know for certain that the provisional government of Bangla Desh can be persuaded to accept this solution. But will Yahya Khan do the same ? Or will he try to resurrect the myth that the East Bengal crisis is only an internal matter ?

So much for the conclusion with which Mr. Gondal ends his article.

Test Favoured

For the sake of arguments, one can concede that the conclusion is debatable and that we should put it to a test. The same, however, cannot be said about the "facts" that have been incorporated in Mr. Gondal's version of the events leading to the army crackdown and Yahya Khan's midnight flight to Islamabad.

By now, all your enlightened readers should know the obvious difference between facts that are gathered by "internationally known impartial observers through eyewitness accounts on the scene and "facts"—the so-called facts which are carefully selected from government files to fit certain preconceived conclusions and judgments.

The latter, the category to which Mr. Gondal's "facts" belong, can only help Gen. Yahya carry on with his disastrous policy towards East Bengal without perhaps even realising why it has evoked so much of outright condemnation from the outside world. But such "facts" cannot serve any other purpose.

Broadly speaking Mr. Gondal's analysis of the crisis in East Bengal covers the history of the relations between the two parts of the country, in political and economic fields, and then goes on to discuss the more recent developments which finally led to the breakup of Pakistan. He has touched on Pakistan's five-year plans, the allocation of development funds for the eastern wing and Islamabad's "efforts" to bridge the gap between two wings of the country.

So much has been already written and published on the causes of economic disparity that exists between the two wings of Pakistan that, in a newspaper article of this kind, one may just reproduce the most essential facts about the kind of "economic progress" that has been brought about in East Bengal during the last 23 years of West Pakistan's "benevolent rule."

To quote from a recent article in Time magazine; "The East contains well over half the population and in early years contributed as much as 70 per cent of the foreign-exchange earnings. But West Pakistan regularly devours three quarters of all foreign aid and 60 per cent of export earnings."

"With the Punjabi-Pathan power elite in control for two decades, East Pakistan has been left a deprived, agricultural

backwater. Before the civil war, Bengalis held only 15 per cent of government jobs and accounted for only 5 per cent of the 275,000 man army, per capita income is miserably low throughout Pakistan, but in the West ($48), it is more than half against that in the East ($30)."

Regime Praised

Instead of reporting these statistics that have been well publicized in an authoritative study of Pakistan's economic scene by a group of six top economists of Dacca—at least three of whom, including Prof. Rahman Sobhan, are now working for the government of Bangla Desh—long before Sheikh Mujibur Rahman presented his six-point plan, Mr. Gondal glibly talks about the "maturity" of the people of "this sound nation" and pays his tribute to his government which according to him, has taken "every possible step to restore parity between the two wings in the services of the Central Government and the armed forces."

With the help of distinguished economists of his province, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was quick to realise that there was something basically wrong with the structure of Pakistan's economy which being tightly controlled by the vested interests of the Punjab could not be too drastically changed, even by a Bengali Prime Minister at the centre, to accelerate the long overdue development of East Bengal.

In this sense as the Sheikh personally told me during an interview in Dacca in December, the present economic frame-work was almost totally unworkable. Eventually, the answer was found in the Awami League's much-discussed six-point program that, through a major re-organisation of powers and responsibilities between the centre and the provinces, was presented to the people as a genuine attempt to save Pakistan.

Mr. Gondal and other apologists for Yahya Khan may now accuse the Awami League leader of refusing to play the role of all-Pakistan leader. What they overlook is that Sheikh Mujibur was more concerned about saving Pakistan through his six-point program, than in playing the role of a Prime Minister in Islamabad. Herein lies the difference between Sheikh Mujibur and Zulfiqar Ali, West Pakistani political leader.

As we all know, the kind of criticisms that are now being made against the six-point program by Islamabad were never heard during the election campaign nor even during Yahya Khan's abortive talks with Sheikh Mujibur in March. Now with Sheikh Mujibur safely shut up inside an army barrack in West Pakistan, government propagandists feel free to accuse the Awami League leader of all conceivable crimes and to interpret his program in the most sinister light.

My own feeling is that President Yahya was a little slow in realising that the economic autonomy of East Pakistan—and this is what the six-point program really meant—would put an end to the exploitation of East Bengal by the vested interests of the West Wing, making it impossible for the army-backed Punjabi power clique to retain its control over the resources of the whole of Pakistan.

Whether President Yahya was pressured by the army to rescue the vested interests of West Pakistan from this predicament or he, on his own, identified himself with the power clique is now beside the point. But once he made up his mind to undo the result of the December election, he would stop at nothing to achieve his goal.

Even Mr. Gondal finds it "very difficult to decide at this moment whether President Yahya was right in coming to the painful decision of postponing the session of the assembly which was scheduled for March 3".

Of course, it was a terrible blunder, an inexcusable action, a move that was so clearly designed to prevent the majority party the Awami League—from taking the six-point program to the floor of the National Assembly. Mr. Bhutto's decision to boycott the opening of the assembly was taken by President Yahya as the excuse for interfering with the legislative process.

But what would have happened if the assembly had met on March 3 without Mr. Bhutto? Under the Legal Framework Order, it had a time limit of 90 days to prepare and approve the draft of the constitution. There was time for the West Pakistan contingent to join the assembly. But even if the Sheikh's party had approved the constitution, the legal framework order still, gave the President the final right to approve or reject the draft before it was put into effect.

Mujibur's Response

Sheikh Mujibur's answer to the postponement was the launching of the civil disobedience movement that was primarily aimed at proving to the world that the people of East Bengal were capable of running their own affairs. Or was Sheikh Mujibur supposed to take President Yahya's action lying down and wait patiently for the President to change his mind ?

To demonstrate his interest in a peaceful settlement, the Awami League leader was still willing to talk to President Yahya when he came to Dacca in his last attempt to hoodwink the people of East Bengal. Since the president's own bonafides were now seriously in doubt, Sheikh Mujibur sought further and stronger safeguards against any further move on the part of Islamabad to sabotage the December election results.

President Yahya Khan discussed them for days, apparently giving enough time to Tikka Khan, now military governor of East Pakistan, to bring in the troops from West Pakistan, and seemingly came very close to accepting them.

On March 22, just two days before the army crackdown, the entire Pakistani Press reported that agreement had been nearly reached. The Pakistan Times of Lahore published a front page report naming Tajuddin Ahmed now the Prime Minister of the provisional government of Bangla Desh, as the man most likely to become the chief minister of East Pakistan during the transitional period.

The talks in Dacca did not break down. President Yahya simply broke them off, without even spelling out what it was in Sheikh Mujibur's demand that was so unacceptable to him and his government. Later, after the Sheikh had been silenced, there were statements after statements by both President Yahya and Mr. Bhutto and even a white paper issued by the Pakistani government—attributing all kinds of demands to the Awami League leader. Fresh accusations were made every day. The entire propaganda machinery of West Pakistan went into action to vilify Sheikh Mujibur and his party, which had won an overwhelming mandate from the 78 million people of East Bengal.

Inevitable Result

East Bengal's unilateral declaration of independence was the inevitable result of the policy adopted by the military junta of Pakistan, led by Gen. Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan. Once the Pakistani leader had outlawed the Awami League, arrested its leader and virtually declared a war on our province, there was no choice for the people of East Bengal but to find their own destiny in their independence.

Once we were convinced that the Pakistani Army was out to destroy whatever chances we had to be an equal partner in an all-Pakistan political framework, we had to look for our own survival in some other kind of framework. The creation of the independent Republic of Bangla Desh provided the only answer.

Let any head of state in any other country follow the example set by President Yahya, the result may well be the same.

Having thrown away all other options, West Pakistani authorities are now left with no choice but to accept the independence of East Bengal and come to terms with the realities of the situation. Whether they do so now before the innocent people of West Pakistan pay a bigger price for their government's war on East Bengal or they do so six months or a year later is something they alone can decide.

But we all know that the guerrilla war inside Bangla Desh is going to get more and more fierce and more and more people—perhaps even other nations are going to get involved in what is already being talked about as another potential Vietnam. Let President Yahya make the choice, the only choice he is left with, before it is too late.

HERALD TRIBUNE International, August 9, 1971
Published with The New York Times
and The Washington Post.

EDITORIAL: CONCERT OF POWERS

It would seem that the imminent possibility of a major clash between India and Pakistan has mobilized, if not the conscience, at least the practical interest, of virtually all the world's powers. The Soviet Union is reportedly urging India toward restraint; Red China is reportedly doing the same with Pakistan; the United States is using what influence it still retains in both countries to similar purpose, and the Western nations in general are trying to apply the brakes before collision occurs. The United Nations—in the person of Secretary-General U Thant is being consulted. This unanimity is as rare as the situation is dangerous.

The hostility between the two states that occupy the subcontinent antedates independence; the friction that divided Moslem and Hindu (to say nothing of the Sikhs and other creeds that make up non-Moslem India) is of centuries-old standing, and created both the partition of India and the numerous territorial disputes that have since exacerbated relations in the divided region.

Neither India nor Pakistan can come before the court of world opinion with wholly clean hands. India's hold on Kashmir may have satisfied the legalistic requirements under which the princes were permitted to opt for either Pakistan or India—it satisfied no other consideration. Pakistan's sin against East Pakistan was far more grievous and more recent. Moreover, it dumped seven million refugees into an India which certainly needs no increments of population, particularly of uprooted peasants with no means of livelihood. The Indian response—to encourage an independent Bangla Desh by every means short of open war—may have been natural, but it certainly was risky, and not necessarily wholly inspired by humanitarian motives.

But war, with its concomitant arousal of the worst forms of communal hatred throughout the sub-continent, and the eventual involvement of other states (the Soviet Union and mainland China, in particular) would be a human tragedy on a scale that would make the respective degrees of guilt of the primary contenders almost irrelevant. An awareness of this has called into being something like that concert of Europe, which functioned, after a fashion, from the downfall of Napoleon to the outbreak of World War I.

The concert of the powers is hardly a perfect device for maintaining the peace. Indeed, it reflects, as much as anything, the weakness of the United Nations. It may be unable to prevent Indians and Pakistanis from grasping at one another's throats. But that it exists at all may give a glimmer of hope for the future, for a day when the UN will be not only universal, but be backed by a measure of recognition useful in preserving the peace.

The present urgent necessity is to find some better way than force to resolve the terrible dilemma of East Pakistan. But beyond that lie the equally portentous problems of Southeast Asia and the Middle East. Concert there could mean a genuine rebirth of confidence for the world.

Letters—On Pakistan

The details (IHT, Aug. 6) of the so-called white paper released by the authorities in Pakistan claiming the killing of 100,000 civilians by Awami League workers before the military action of 25th March, 1971, seem unconvincing for more than one reason.

During the period from March 1 to March 25 there were more than one hundred foreign journalists in East Pakistan who were covering the minute-to-minute developments without any press censorship. None of them saw or heard of the mass killing. Besides, all through this period the West Pakistan Army were in full and effective control of the airports and seaports. Their ominous presence at every street corner was also there for all to see. To believe that they were mute observer of such a killing would mean giving the Pakistani Army the credit for self-restraint which unfortunately, they have already proved, is the quality they are lacking most.

As one who was not involved in politics but who nevertheless got very much caught in the holocaust, may I be allowed to put the successive incidents in their correct sequence.

Before March 25 when the first ship carrying arms and ammunition from West Pakistan docked at Chittagong Port, the Bengali dockers refused to unload the cargo under instructions from the Awami League on the valid ground that they should not carry the cross on which they were to be crucified.

At this point the local non-Bengali workers who have been looked after by Bengal for the last 23 years volunteered to unload the cargo in defiance of the sentiment and interest of the Bengalis. Hundreds of non-Bengalis marched to the port and menacingly confronted the Bengalis. In the fight that ensued, the army supported the non-Bengalis by shooting dead most of the Bengali dockers.

Mujib demanded an official inquiry which was grudgingly agreed to by President Yahya with a significant condition which was that the commission would be headed by the General who, the Bengalis believed, had given the order to shoot. There was, however, no inquiry and Mujib was taken prisoner on the night of March 25.

As the stories of the ruthless massacre of the unarmed Bengali civilians by the army reached Chittagong on March 26, the Bengali Officers and men of the East Bengal Regiment and East Pakistan Rifles revolted and took control of the town of Chittagong. During the eight or nine days that the rebels were in control the Bengali civilians of the town got back at the non-Bengalis who only a few days back joined hand with the West Pakistani Army in killing the dockers.

Several hundred non-Bengalis were killed during this period, but as soon as the town fell back into the hands of the West Pakistani Army they went on a rampage of killing, raping and burning that was vividly described in all its brutality by foreigners, including UN workers who were later on evacuated to Calcutta.

A murder is a murder, irrespective of the sequence of events, but a trial is not a trial without the sequence of events,

especially when it is claimed that Mujib is going to have a fair trial.

Zurich, A. MAJID

Major Powers Seek To Avert War In Bengal
By Tad Szulc

The principal Western powers, the Soviet Union, China and Secretary-General Thant were reported yesterday to be engaged in new diplomatic efforts to prevent the possible outbreak of fighting between India and Pakistan.

Authoritative diplomats said that, acting independently, a half dozen governments with special ties to India or Pakistan have taken initiatives aimed at persuading the Indians and the Pakistanis to seek a peaceful solution to the crisis involving East Pakistan.

For the United States, the State Department spokesman, Robert J. McCloskey, said yesterday: "We have been and continue to be concerned about the possibility that the security situation in East Pakistan and eastern India could escalate and we have accordingly counselled restraint on both sides".

On President Nixon's instructions, Secretary of State William P. Rogers and Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Joseph J. Sisco are to confer in New York tomorrow with Secretary-General Thant and other UN officials on the humanitarian aspects of the East Pakistan crisis.

But administration officials said that inevitably these conferences would touch on the political situation as well as on international peace-keeping possibilities.

Last Monday, Mr. Thant warned in a memorandum to the members of the Security Council that a major conflict could erupt between India and Pakistan and "could all too easily expand".

Officials here said that Washington's diplomacy was directed chiefly at Pakistan. Where the United States hopes to have retained some influence with President Mohammad

Yahya Khan through the continued flow of economic aid and the refusal to block shipments of military equipment purchased by the Pakistanis before the East Pakistan conflict erupted in March.

U.N. relations with India are at one of the lowest points in decades, largely because of Indian anger over the military equipment shipments.

India believes that American policies serve to support President Yahya whose West Pakistani troops have been attempting to crush a secessionist movement in East Pakistan.

This repression has caused more than seven million East Pakistanis to flee to eastern India, creating the current tensions between India and Pakistan, which have remained hostile since their brief war in 1965.

Diplomats here said that one of the most positive recent developments has been a new awareness in the international community that both the Soviet Union and China are as anxious as the West to avoid a major conflict on the sub-continent.

Consequently, they said, Moscow which has close ties with India, is quiety counselling caution in New Delhi while publicly offering support for the Indian cause.

Diplomatic reports reaching Washington late last week indicated that Peking, which last March publicly proclaimed its determination to help defend West Pakistan, is privately advising President Yahya to act with prudence.

The threat of a war between India and Pakistan had raised fears of direct involvement by the Soviet Union and China on opposing sides.

But responsible American officials and foreign diplomats are now reported to believe that neither Moscow nor Peking wishes to see a war in which they might be forced into a direct confrontation.

Consequently, the judgment here is that the suddenly announced visit to New Delhi by the Soviet foreign minister, Andrei A. Gromyko, is more of a diplomatic peace-making mission than simply a gesture of support for India.

NEWSWEEK August 16, 1971
PAKISTAN: MOMENT OF DECISION

In an opening statement at his press conference last week, President Nixon argued for continued U.S. support of the Pakistani Government, despite its harsh attempts to suppress the Bangla Desh Independence movement in the eastern portion of the country. "We feel", explained the President, "that the most constructive role we can play is to continue our economic assistance to West Pakistan and, thereby, to be able to influence the course of events...." But even as Mr. Nixon spoke, fourteen Bengali diplomats were coming to a far different conclusion.

At a news conference held just three blocks from the White House, the diplomats announced their resignation from the Pakistani Embassy and United Nations mission. "It is no longer possible," said Sayid F. Karim, deputy permanent representative to the U.N., "to remain silent spectators to the barbarous actions of the Pakistan Government, which has turned Bangla Desh into a land of death and terror. This is our moment of decision." The decision will probably lead to political asylum in the U.S. for the fourteen Bengalis. And the defectors were hoping that their example would prompt similar resignations at other Pakistani missions around the world.

U.S. DIPLOMATIC MESSAGES: RTT File, August 26, 1971
KENNEDY'S ADDRESS TO PRESS CLUB

Senator Edward M. Kennedy has again called on the United States to stop all military and economic aid to West Pakistan until that country comes to a political accommodation with East Pakistanis now under military occupation as a result of their claims for greater political and economic freedom.

At the same time the United States should greatly expand its present humanitarian aid to India to help her care for millions of East Pakistanis who have taken refuge on her soil, the senator said in a speech to the National Press Club on Thursday.

He said that although current U.S. humanitarian help for the refugees amounts to about 80 million by far the largest single country contribution of some 150 million dollars being collected by the United Nations for such help, Senator Kennedy said he would introduce a proposal for expanding the help in the Senate when it resumes its deliberations in September.

The senator estimated the Indian outlay on behalf of the refugees this year could range from 500 to 1,000 million dollars.

Senator Kennedy said he would also make a special report to the Senate on his recent week-long inspection-tour of East Pakistani refugee camps in India and that he planned to hold further hearings on the refugees in his capacity as Chairman of the senate sub-committee on refugees.

He said he was appalled by his findings during the recent visit to refugee camps in India.

"Not until you see it first hand can you feel its intensity", the Senator said in describing the desperate conditions he found for young and old among the refugees.

Senator Kennedy said that while India, with its own pressing needs, could have closed its borders to the refugees, it was to her "everlasting credit" that she chose instead "the path of compassion" towards them.

While India's efforts for the refugees are "Herculean," he said, it is beyond her capacity and her moral obligation to assume the burden alone. He called on all countries to assume their rightful share of a burden he said was truly international.

Senator Kennedy criticised what he called U.S. Government rationalisation that its continued help to West Pakistan gave the United States leverage to ameliorate conditions for the East Pakistanis.

Such leverage has not been used so far, he said, to get Pakistan to stop using U.S. arms and economic assistance

against the East Pakistanis or to stop the secret trial of East Pakistan leader Sheikh Mujibur.

He cited an instance of West Pakistan's diversion of American rivercraft designed to help Pakistan's internal commerce to be used for military assaults on East Pakistanis.

Senator Kennedy said there could be no final solution of the East Pakistan crisis until there is a political accommodation by West Pakistan with the just aims of East Pakistanis for more political and economic freedom.

The current crisis, he said, represents "not only a tragedy for Pakistan and India but for the world".

If it is not solved expeditiously and justly, he said, it could be a "Terminal Cancer" blighting both India and Pakistan.

In his speech and in his response to questions, there was no reference to the fact that he was denied entrance into Pakistan to study the situation there and to talk with Pakistani leaders.

There was also no reference to complaints voiced by Senator Kennedy's staff assistants in India that there was a breakdown in co-operation provided to them by the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi — a charge denied by the Embassy.

Responding to questions, Senator Kennedy said that while refugee conditions are distressing both in the Middle East and the Indian refugees camps, the situation in India is "most depressing" because of its sheer magnitude and said the refugee situation in both areas could be solved adequately only through a political settlement.

He further said he would not recommend a break in U.S. diplomatic relations with Pakistan at this time but that this move should be considered now for possible use later if U.S. "leverage" continues to be ineffective.

He declined to pin a "left-wing socialist" tag on Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and said she was pursuing a policy of doing what is best for India "in a way completely consonant with American interests whatever level you give her".

Reiterated his previous stand that he was not a presidential candidate in 1972 but said that he expected to play an important role in developing the domestic and foreign policy platforms on which the democratic party would stand in the 1972 presidential race.

South Asian Reporting In U.S. Newspapers

The Monitor's "letters to the editor" column published the complaint of Dr. John Rhode of Boston, formerly of the Pakistan-Seato Cholera Research Laboratories in Dacca that early warnings by civilians like himself as well as "high officials in the state department posted at Dacca" were ignored with tragic consequences to human lives in strife-torn East Pakistan. "Today, four months later," said Rhode, "the holocaust goes on with continuing American economic assistance and military aid sustaining the Yahya government". Rhode added that rather than wait for a "concert of the great powers," the United States "should act today by ceasing all aid to the Pakistan Military Government".

The Washington Post reported that heavy floods in East Pakistan on Wednesday increased the threat of famine in a region already devastated by an earlier cyclone and the current civil war.

THE NATION (Freetown) September 4, 1971

EDITORIAL: PAKISTAN GETS ANGRY WITH THE WEST

"Pakistan should forego western economic aid if it is to be used as a lever against Pakistan's national interest. This is the recurring theme of statements by Pakistani political leaders, editorial comments, articles and letters to editors. Significantly, the demand is coming from leaders of parties always regarded as pro-west. The same is true of a large segment of the press. Left wing leaders had always opposed western aid in its present form. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, chief of the Pakistan Peoples Party at one time even demanded repudiation of foreign debts. Now all are unanimous in urging the government to spurn foreign aid with strings from western countries and galvanise the nation into a massive effort for self-sufficiency mainly through self-reliance. A little belt-tightening, re-shaping of priorities, and assistance from China and affluent Muslim and Arab countries should enable Pakistan to tide over the present economic difficulties, say the opponents of western aid. They believe Pakistan will emerge stronger in the long term if western nations withhold their aid on any plea. They call for full support for the government in withstanding western pressures for a political

settlement in East Pakistan that would suit India or western powers alone.

Pakistan is moving towards a political solution of the problem and democratic processes will take their course. But the type of solution and its time will be decided by the dictates of national interests alone—aid or no aid. The Russians—and to some extent the Americans—reacted to events in Pakistan in a way that angered Pakistanis and Britain has become the main target of criticism. Sir Alec Douglas Home's statement that Britain could insist that Pakistan provide a suitable political framework before agreeing to any new economic aid project is regarded as a departure from the British government's previous stand over the matter. But the British press is arousing the most ire. The Pakistani press was traditionally friendly to western countries, particularly Britain, and always gave extensive coverage to British news and views. It seems this is all about to change. Almost the entire British press is accused here not only of having swallowed Indian propaganda hook, line and sinker, but also of blacking out or playing down Pakistan's side of the case. Pakistanis in Britain are mailing to newspapers here letters putting Pakistan's case sent to British papers but not printed. There is speculation as to whether the British press was encouraged—tacitly or other—by the British Government. Some compare it with the Western press campaign against the late President Nasser just before the Suez War. An ominous note is detected here.

Several letters urged Pakistani papers not to publish anything from or about western countries—particularly Britain except major policy statement. They say more news from China, Iran, Indonesia, Turkey, Arab and other friendly countries should be published. Deep Indian involvement in East Pakistani events seems to have been overlooked by most British commentators. Few have criticised India for arming the secessionists, sending infiltrators and carrying out a virulent propaganda campaign against Pakistan, including calls to East Pakistanis to rebel. Threats by India's top leaders against Pakistan and the current massing of Indian troops along Pakistan's border were not considered worthy of comments by most British editors, say the critics. It is argued that the British press, with its long association with the sub-continent and knowledge of relations between India and Pakistan should have done better.

THE LE SOLEIL (Dakar) Senegal, September 7, 1971
INDIA FACES AN ORDEAL ON THE ROAD OF PAKISTANI EXODUS :
By Bara Diouf

India is at present screening the most dreadful drama of her history. 50,000 refugees are daily crossing into its border. There are more than 8 million in Bengal. The Government is spending 20 million rupees daily to feed them. A drop of water in the ocean of their misery. This is the tragedy of the civil war in East Pakistan. The state of Bangla Desh was born on 26th March, 1971 at least in the spirit of the militant Bengali separatists of the Awami League of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. East Pakistan, they explained, is separated from West Pakistan by more than 1500 kilometer of Indian territory. The language spoken in one part of Pakistan is different from the other as are the populations. Even Islam which is our religion is different from that of West Pakistan. Under these conditions how can there be a cultural unity which could justify a united single Nation?

The worst thing, they add, is that West Pakistan has been exploiting us like a colony instead of treating us as part of the Nation. In administration, army, police, all posts of responsibility have been reserved for the people of West Pakistan. The banks, insurance companys, industry and trade are all controlled by them. This led to an impossible colonisation. The things had become worse till the general elections were held in Pakistan in which the Awami League of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman emerged successful. With a total of 169 members out of 300 members of the future Assembly it obtained a simple majority but sufficient enough to reclaim for Sheikh Mujib and for his party the substantial responsibilities in the conduct of government affairs and in the legal structure.

Was General Yahya Khan prepared, as he had earlier promised, for elaboration of a Constitution and maximum autonomy for East Pakistan? It does not seem so since his armed intervention on 25th March, 1971 gave a signal for a bloody repression, arrest of irredentist Bengalis, exodus and finally as most of the observers feel, to the civil war which now rages in Dacca.

Twenty thousand guerrillas scattered all over East Pakistan should be able to obtain independence by force against 70,000 soldiers equipped with modern arms of the army of Yahya Khan. The issue of combat should not give any doubt but the wars of resistance and national liberation cannot be subject to the same criteria and same norms as of classical wars of major states. At the moment this is the exodus into the neighbourly India which has abruptly precipitated a tragedy that could conflagrate the situation.

Calcutta is perhaps the most picturesque as well as difficult city in the world. A jewel of the ex-British empire of India, it now suffers under the burden of human misery and confusion. Her drama started in 1912 when the authorities decided to deprive her of the envied title of the capital of Indian empire by shifting it to Delhi, situated about 1500 kilometers in the North-West. The partition in 1947, resulting in the division of Bengal of which Calcutta was the commercial and industrial city and the largest port of communication with outside world, inflicted a second blow on her from which it will never recover. The jute, which was the source of her prosperity and which came from rich plantations of East Pakistan, no more feeds the factories of Calcutta. The port itself, which used to be an active place, is now in distress. Today Calcutta, with its 8 million population, is no more than its own shadow. Filthy and over-populated, Calcutta has now a misery which continues to increase due to incessant flow of refugees. Bicycles, rickshaws, auto-rickshaws, shabby vehicles, flood its streets on which one finds imperturbed cows, always sacred in the eternal India.

Thousands of small businessmen are now settled on narrow footpaths. Small and filthy shops, destitute families are seen occupying houses which are no better than wooden frames, the traffic is impossible and disorderly and multitudes of unemployed persons always ready for adventures is the picture of Calcutta at this moment when India is undergoing perhaps the most gloomy time of her history. The guide, who came to escort me from Oberoi Hotel, one of the latest palaces of the past, informed me that our journey was long and hard. He was going to take me for a bath of refugees (bain de refugies).

Calcutta due to her geographical situation with East Pakistan and being an old capital of Bengal, is the city to which rushed all those who fled from civil war of East Pakistan. Some kilometers from the city, on a plain soil of many hectars,



Bengali refugees in India.
Sunday Times : 3-6-71.



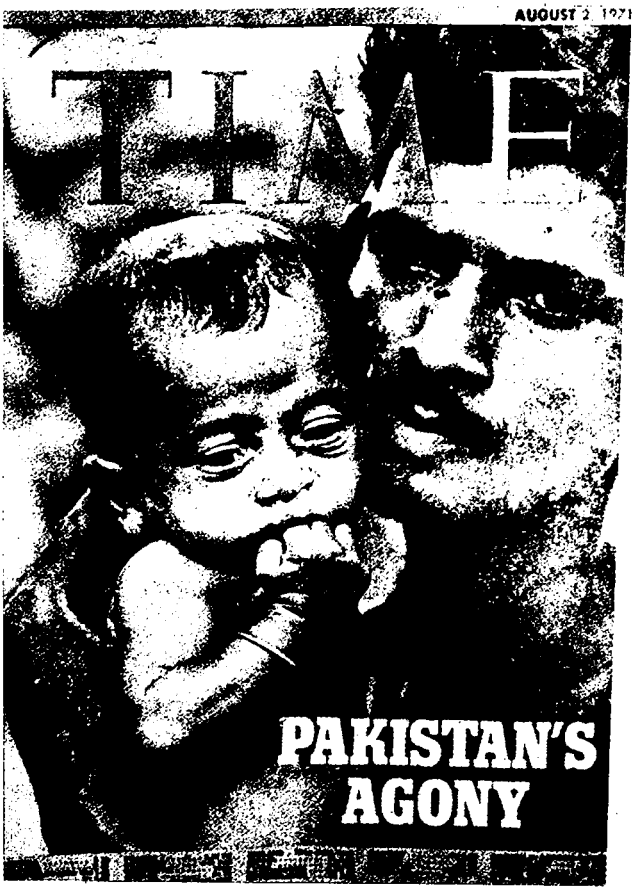
Mukti Bahini guerrillas: 'We are fighting for a new nation, Bangla Desh'

Bengal: The Time of Revenge

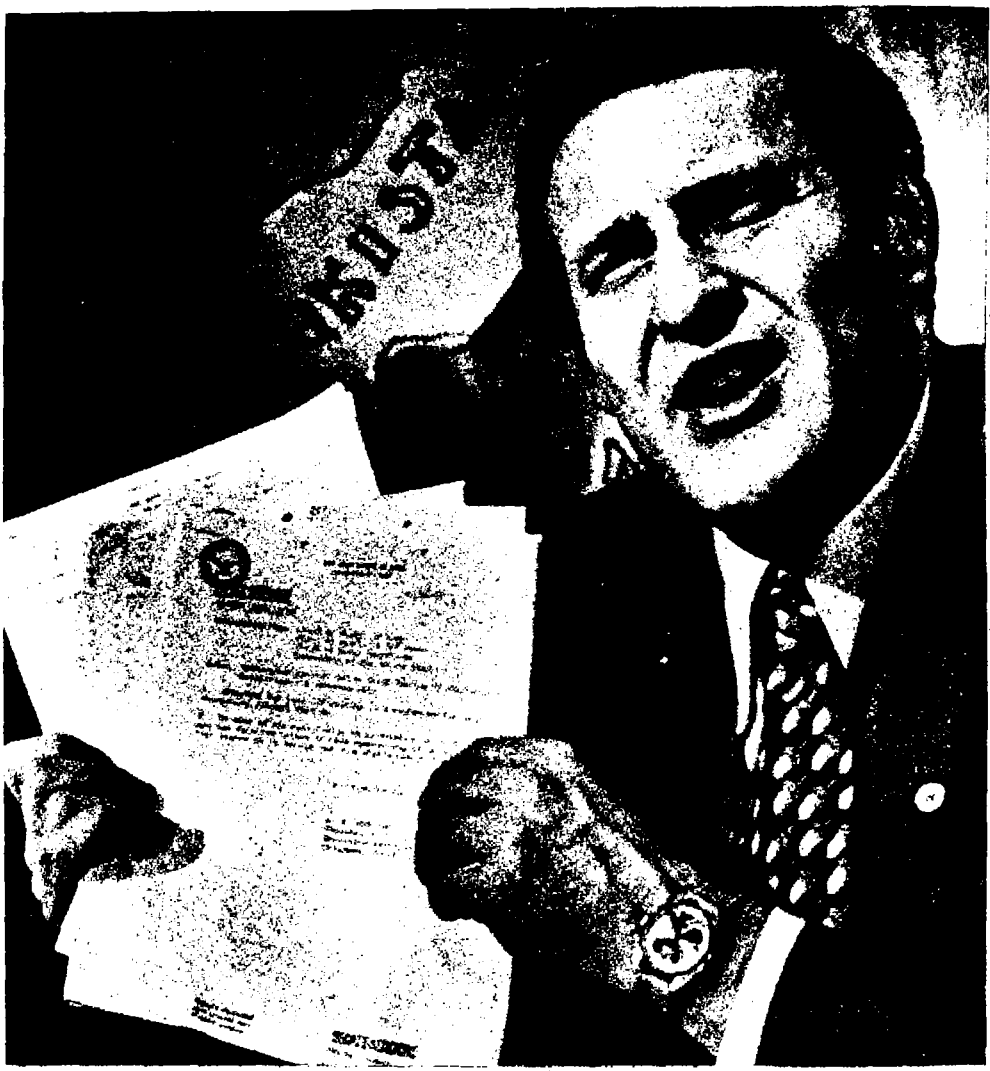
Bengal : Time of Revenge.
Newsweek : 22-11-71.



An old man had everything once, but nothing now.
Photo : Kishor Parekh.



Cover story : 2-8-71



Anderson holds documents which he says describe key White House Strategy Session during the Indo-Pak War. Courtesy : Morning News.

lies the human misery which I was able to see. Accumulated, **Pell-mell** in the refugee camps, were 200,000 persons who had escaped from the terror and have now during a few weeks created a new city in the neighbourhood of Calcutta. A suffocating smell and filth all around obsessed me. The children in clusters were lying under the sun in front of their tents. They looked dull and sometime bewildered. The smiles seemed to have deserted their faces, howsoever sweet they were. At a distance from them were their parents, including women and aged persons, clothed in rags of faded colours, who were rushing to form a queue for their food ration which was being distributed with parsimony. There was milk, semolina and dry-vegetables but food shortage was obvious. The Indian administration, assisted by international organisations, is trying with all means at her disposal to meet the situation which unfortunately is deteriorating every day. In Calcutta itself there are two camps of refugees, each of about 200,000 persons. Twenty other camps are scattered all over Bengal. A camp for administration purpose and for distribution of food is divided in zones. In each zone there is a centre of distribution of food and vaccinations. The relief is being provided by UNICEF, FAO, U.N. High Commission for Refugees, International Red Cross, W.H.O. and other private humanitarian organisations. But still this does not suffice. On 15th August, 1971 the number of refugees became upto 8 million and according to specialists it continued to increase at the rate of 50,000 refugees per day. The Indian Government is spending 20 million rupees per day to meet the situation and is looking forward for international help in face of such a misery.

Bongaon, about 52 miles from Calcutta, is the frontier city which has become the point of entry for refugees. I spent two hours to reach there and another two hours to contact the misery of a horrible magnitude. The car in which I was travelling was running on a rough but a good road. On both sides of embankment there were immense plantations of rice and jute. This is the season of monsoon, a terrible rainy season, cool and persistent which is common in India. Everywhere along the road there was stagnant water and refugees shivering with cold and disabled bodies of sick and hungry persons. They were taking shelter in feeble huts of bamboo and jute and the monsoon was continuously falling, aggravating their miseries.

These were the refugees who had not yet been taken in charge by the Government as they had just crossed the frontier with their handy baggage on their heads after walking for many days and leaving everything behind. Entry into the Indian territory was a hope for them. The first relief which they receive is the medical assistance. At the post they are given all vaccinations—plague, cholera, and small-pox etc. An official told me that at this stage the Government came to know about the precise number of refugees entering India. They were keeping the record in the medical files. While I was speaking with him a stretcher was brought by two relief workers on which a woman of 20 years was lying still with her eyes without life. Beside her a child of skeleton structure was lying. It was obvious that the mother of this child was certainly dying. Nothing was less sure.

THE DAILY MORNING POST (Nigeria) September 10, 1971
SECESSION ATTEMPT IN PAKISTAN
By Tunji Adeosun

Pakistan occupies a prominent position in the political might of Asia. Being the biggest Muslim state and fifth largest in world population, her affairs can easily become the affairs of the world. No wonder the civil war in that country had so provoked world-wide comments in the Press. And now the frightening reality of the aftermath of the Pakistani crisis is the refugee problem whereby some million homeless people are reported to have gone over to India. What is the cause of Pakistan's predicament? A secession was being attempted by a political group belonging to the majority in term of population and the government of Pakistan ordered an action to arrest the situation. But after facing an armed resistance from the secessionists, the government brought the situation under control and is now engaged in restoring economic life and organising relief measures in East Pakistan—the territory that attempted to secede. Contrary to sensational reports that a worsening situation is being experienced in East Pakistan, reliable and accurate sources disclose that many

factories and industrial units have resumed their normal work. Communications and transportation on railways and the riverine have been largely restored. Also, the movement and distribution of food grains and other essential goods have also been resumed.

The war in Pakistan has attracted such attention and not unexpectedly the sensationalism of some sections of the Western press has also come into play. So, exaggerated accounts of the situation in that country similar to that to which Nigeria was treated during her own trouble was being fed to unwary readers. These pressmen were trying to equate the situation in Pakistan with that in Vietnam, putting West Pakistan in place of the United States of America and the East Pakistani secessionists in place of the North Vietnamese. But even a child knows that a more appropriate analogy, if one is to be sought, is the recent use of the federal troops against the secessionists in Nigeria, or the use of British forces in Belfast, or even that of federal troops by the United States of America within its own territories. The picture of trigger-happy Pakistan Army is a completely false one. In an attempt to refute most of these false reports, the Pakistani Government has taken around foreign correspondents to see the Dacca University falsely reported to have been razed to the ground. Many scholars alleged to have been killed along with their families have appealed on Dacca television and contradicted the false reports. Even fifty scholars issued a joint statement protesting the allegations of a New York group of scholars that they were killed. The Italian Ambassador in Pakistan was taken to Jessore and other places and he ascertained the falsehood of the reports about murder of the Catholic students in an Italian missionary school, and the brother of the Italian Bishop supposed to have been murdered in East Pakistan has been reported by Reuters to have contradicted the news personally.

One other false pictorial story which sounds rather funny to the commonsense is that of three dead bodies said to have been victims of an aerial bombardment by Pakistani jets. These dead bodies are neatly placed on the pedicab—without any damage to the pedicabs. How can an aerial bomb kill three people and leave the pedicab on which they stood quite undamaged? It is incredible. Another wonderful report was that of some refugees said to have told a London paper how they were shot through the neck and through the chest by the

Pakistani soldiers, and they survived. For persons to survive military rifle shots through one's neck and through one's chest is something which, if anybody can believe, he would have to create a new science. Talking of the politics behind the Pakistan issue, one must consider the last request of Sheikh Mujib just before he broke away. He asked President Yahya Khan to issue a proclamation abrogating Martial Law, transferring powers to the five provinces of Pakistan, and instead of one National Assembly for Pakistan, two constitutional conventions be called to draw up separate constitutions for East Pakistan and West Pakistan. People have described this plain demand for secession as a demand for autonomy. As originally claimed, the six-points were no more than a mechanism for providing the largest possible measure of autonomy to East Pakistan within the framework of a single country. Throughout the year long electioneering campaign, the Awami League leadership took pains to emphasise that their six points were not the "word of God" that they were open to negotiation and that it was mischievous on the part of the critics even to suggest that the six points visualised anything outside the framework of Pakistan. This remained the Awami League's position—right up to the polls, and accordingly it evoked statements from West Pakistan leaders, expressing their readiness to work out accommodation with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, both to evolve a constitution under legal framework order and to set up a government.

However, as soon as Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had secured the electorate's verdict in favour of autonomy, he started elaborating and interpreting the six points in a manner the electorate had not bargained for, and adopted a deliberate posture of rigidity that left no room for negotiations. His attitude now was ; "Take it or leave." One political leader after another, including the leader of the largest political party of West Pakistan, flew to Dacca to negotiate a settlement with him. The President of Pakistan paid several visits but to no avail. Publicly described as would-be Prime Minister, Sheikh Mujib showed no interest in the all-Pakistan role which the nation was willing—even eager for him to assume. He refused even to visit West Pakistan. When a temporary adjournment of the National Assembly was announced with the object of facilitating talks among party leaders to pave the way for an agreed approach to constitution-making within

the House, Sheikh Mujib seized the opportunity to launch a massive defiance of law and order. Again, Sheikh Mujibur did not during elections ask for secession, neither was any mandate given to him by any people to declare it. Therefore the reports in some sections of the Press which had attempted to glorify the secessionist movement as a popular demand is not only devoid of truth, but also a kind of psychological warfare against Pakistan's integrity.

The truth is that a military action supported by a majority of East Pakistanis was ordered against the secessionists, and not a war between East Pakistan. Neither will it be right to describe the government of Pakistan as "West Pakistan Government". Unless one is bent on creating a North and South Vietnams in the land of the Pakistanis. Pakistan is based on a very solid foundation and while it may have its ups and downs, as any ideological State would have, it would be churlish to forget the 1000 year historical process in the sub-continent that created Pakistan.

THE WEEKLY FRONTIER (Calcutta) September 11, 1971.

CHINA AND PAKISTAN

By T. Karki Hussain

As of today, evidence has piled up to suggest equally (a) that China is determined to support the West Pakistan regime wholeheartedly against the nationalists fighting for statehood in Bangladesh ; and (b) that China has kept her options open and that it is quite possible that her present stand on Bangladesh may shift radically according to the direction the Bangladesh struggle takes. If the first proposition is acceptable then ideology would no more play an important role in China's foreign policy decisions.

If the second is taken as correct, then ideology still remains a dominant factor in her policy-making. Perhaps it would be more correct to suggest that there is an element of truth in both these propositions. To say this we have to examine also the factors—historically, ideologically and diplomatically identifiable—which in their totality determine the Chinese view of the Bangladesh struggle.

These factors can be categorised as follows:

(1) Chinese policy on nationalities from the point of view of her own national experience;

(2) Chinese view of the struggle for self-determination in other countries (Biafra and Kashmir as case studies);

(3) Chinese understanding of the internal developments in Pakistan and the class character of the Awami League movement in East Pakistan; and

(4) China's immediate diplomatic stakes in the sub-continent.

China's stand on nationalities differed radically from that of Soviet Russia. On the other hand the thinking on struggles for self-determination underlined China's commitment to certain ideological objectives. The immediacy of China's diplomatic aims and the ideological line, as we shall attempt to show, seems to have brought about a compromise in her present stance on Bangladesh. Whatever might have been the Soviet practice, there is a long tradition in the history of the Soviet communist movement to theoretically define the right of self-determination of nationalities. The official line as advanced by Stalin defined a nation as a "historically evolved stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up, manifested in a community of culture". Interpreting the nation thus, Stalin proclaimed its right of self-determination. "It has the right to arrange its life on the basis of autonomy. It has the right to enter into federal relations with other nations. It has the right to complete secession. Nations are sovereign, and all nations are equal". (Stalin, Marxism and the National and Colonial Question pp. 8 & 19) Lenin had later realised the differences in the theoretical approach to the question of nationalities and its practice in the Soviet Union. In his last days he was very much worried about Great Russian chauvinism which he warned should be suppressed so that the "weaker" nationalities need not exchange class exploitation for exploitation by the Great Russians. Lenin had declared war to the death on Great Russian chauvinism in a letter to the politbureau on October 6, 1922 (Louis Fischer, Life of Lenin N. Y. 1964, p. 610).

In the Soviet Constitution also, the principle of self-determination was consecrated in the provision that the various republics retained the right to secede from the Soviet

Republic. Although Soviet practice has universally contradicted this principle, the fact must nevertheless be noted that in the total Soviet ideological position, national self-determination has been accorded a very important place.

In contrast, the Chinese People's Republic does not concede the right of secession even in theory. Mao considers the national minority problem as a class problem and class struggle is the main theme of the Chinese communist policy on national minorities. By 1962, the Chinese leadership was asserting the fact that there are no contradictions between nationalities but only between classes. (Mosley, China Quarterly, No. 24, October-December 1965, p. 16). Elucidating the point further, Liu Chiun, Member, Nationalities Committee, Third National People's Congress, argued in 1964 that "the unreformed national and religious upper strata elements of the national minorities would try to incite national contradictions in order to protect or rehabilitate their class interests. A bourgeoisie still exists in some of the national minorities, and the bourgeoisie and the ideological influence of the bourgeoisie are the root source that gives rise to nationalism. It it quite clear that the nationality question in our country at present is still essentially a class question and its root cause is still class, class contradictions, class struggle and the struggle between the two roads". ("The current nationality question and class struggle in our country". Hung Ch'i, No. 12, June 30, 1964; translation in Selections from China Mainland Magazines, No. 428 August 4, 1964, p. 14).

The most immediate and practical instance of the Chinese position is the Tibetan uprising in 1959 which was conceded by the Chinese to have been based on class struggle—a counter-revolutionary movement engineered by a handful of upper strata feudal reactionaries against the Tibetan people. The class view of the Tibetan revolt was merged with the Chinese fear that China's territorial integrity was being interfered with by outside powers, including India. It would be seen that since 1949 China's main aim has been to bring border areas under centralised control as a step to defend and strengthen her territorial integrity. This process, however, has to be justified in terms of class struggle just as the Soviets in practice also suppressed the nationalities in Central Asia during the Stalin period. Thus as far as China's internal experience with the nationalities is concerned, political

consolidation and territorial security have been the primary motives with ideology coming as a weak cover.

The Chinese attitude to self-determination could be best illustrated from the stand China has taken on Kashmir and Biafra. Notwithstanding her close diplomatic relations with the military regime in Islamabad, China has not changed her basic understanding on Kashmir i.e. she supports the just struggle of the Kashmiri people for self-determination. Although this stand has been interpreted as a product of China's anti-Indian stance, it should be noted that it does not support Pakistan's official policy either. The Chinese view of self-determination of the Kashmiri people provides them with option of either (1) keeping their independence or autonomy from both India and Pakistan or (2) choosing India or Pakistan. As to what means should be followed to obtain the views of the Kashmiri people on either of these choices, China has said that the pledge given to the Kashmiris should be honoured by India and Pakistan.

On Biafra which represented the secessionist movement of the Ibo minorities of Nigeria, the Chinese stand was a more committed one in terms of material support in the form of small arms through other African countries. But whereas some African States (Tanzania, Zambia, Ivory Coast and Gabon) and France recognised Biafra, China did not extend diplomatic recognition to it. This might indicate that the Chinese were watching the developments in the Nigerian civil war. At the same time China's pro-Biafra attitude was motivated by the fact that the super-powers were trying to divide the African continent into their respective spheres. The Chinese stand therefore resembled that of France which was also aiming at curbing the growing influence of the big powers. It, however, differed from France because of ideological inhibitions as to whether the movement in Biafra was engineered by bourgeois class interests.

Paradoxically, the Chinese stand on Kashmir reflects adherence to the Soviet ideology of self-determination without a Chinese commitment to support the Kashmiris materially. On the Biafra issue, on the other hand, the Chinese stand had no such ideological basis giving it at the same time the leverage to the extent of materially supporting the Biafrans.

What is the Chinese understanding of the situation in East Bengal ? First of all, the question arises as to how the Chinese identify the character of the Bangla Desh movement ? What direction is the movement taking ? On these questions, it is as yet too early to define the Chinese responses. It is clear that China would not be deterred by the pervasive apprehension of escalation of the struggle as India would be. Instability in East Bengal and a protracted struggle would hurt the interests of the power-elite in India rather than that of China. The reasons are not far to seek. For, if the struggle escalates, it may have serious repercussions on West Bengal which at the moment is the most troubled area of the Indian Union. Since there is already an extreme left movement in West Bengal, the spread of instability across the borders might further help these elements. In such a situation, the Chinese might interpret the developments in ideological terms.

It could be asked why China does not help escalate the situation in Bangla Desh from the point of view of supporting it. This can be only answered on the basis of what has been already discussed about the Chinese understanding of the nationality question. China cannot express sympathy with the Awami League movement because it is a bourgeois-dominated movement. Secondly, since the Awami League leaders have close contact with India, the Chinese would naturally not be sympathetic at the moment. For, any success of the Bangla Desh struggle under Awami League leadership may only mean a gain for India. There could be a third consideration as well. It is because India stresses the democratic aspect of the movement in Bangla Desh that China might also consider that such a movement goes against her revolutionary concepts. Unlike the Soviet Union, China has not considered parliamentary democracy as a step in the direction of socialist development. A successful democratic struggle in Bangla Desh may then in China's view become an obstacle to a revolutionary class struggle. Hence, China's non-support to the present struggle led by the Awami League may as well mean support to a left oriented movement at an opportune time.

The diplomatic stakes can be measured in terms of (1) Chinese suspicion of Soviet expansionist schemes in South Asia where India is a complementary factor ; (2) Chinese sup-

port to the Pakistan regime originates from their assessment of the sixties about India playing a hostile role against their interests. In other words support to Pakistan has been governed by the well-known principle, "the enemy of your enemy is your best friend". (3) Whatever may be the character of the military regime in Pakistan, the Chinese think that a revolutionary movement is most likely to succeed in Pakistan because parliamentary democracy has not yet become the main instrument of the bourgeoisie to consolidate its position in Pakistan.

In the immediate future therefore China would like to keep the posture of verbal support to Pakistan and threat to India of possible measures she would take in case India intervened in East Bengal. This is also a legalistic stand in so far as international standards on secessionist movements are concerned. The world order did not come in support of Biafra because it considered that the movement would lead to the disintegration of a sovereign independent State, the single important constituent that makes the world society. This minimum posture helps her second objective, that of keeping Pakistan as a viable unit to oppose the joint schemes that the Soviet Union and India might impose on South Asia. In other words, the status quo in South Asia helps China's revolutionary stance, whereas the posture of the Soviet Union and possibly India if she is to succeed would have to consider a radical change in the status quo. That is to say, the present non-committal attitude of China (which includes traditional, moral and some material support to Pakistan) leaves room for escalation of the Bangla Desh movement into a class struggle involving India and Pakistan. In order to prevent this situation, India has to see the immediate success of the Bangladesh struggle under Awami League leadership.

It is possible that because Pakistan played an intermediary role in the current trend towards a Sino-American detente, China would not like to see any widespread disruption leading to a collapse of the regime in Rawalpindi. On Bangla Desh, China has shown that a minimum posture can bring maximum benefit in terms of the present. As to the future, the doors are wide open. It is up to Peking to interpret the developing situation in Bangla Desh either in terms of ideology or real politik.

THE GLASGOW HERALD (Glasgow) September 13, 1971
EDITORIAL: MRS. GANDHI IN RUSSIA

The outcome of Mrs. Gandhi's three day visit to Moscow must give some welcome reassurance to the Indian Government confronted with the immense problem posed by the invasion of millions of refugees from East Pakistan. Soviet denunciation—notably by Mr. Kosygin—of the Pakistan Government's complicity in the exodus of mainly Hindus from Bangla Desh is the strongest indication yet of Russian concern at the turn of events in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. This would be prompted not just by Mrs. Gandhi's presence in the Russian capital. Russia certainly fears the repercussions of an outbreak of hostilities between India and Pakistan. A war between the two countries is still very much on the cards if India were to abandon her present policy of restraint, and Mrs. Gandhi has claimed with truth and feeling that many countries have not given India enough credit for keeping the situation below boiling point. After all, nothing suits President Yahya Khan better than to shift the blame for the refugee crisis on to provocation by India, conveniently overlooking the increasingly well documented ferocity of the Pakistan Army that terrorised millions into flight. India has so far ignored the wild propaganda from Karachi: she cannot be expected to do so for even if no progress is forthcoming—either from Pakistan or international quarters—on the refugees question, which must be putting untold pressure on Indian resources.

Russia knows only too well that war between India and Pakistan would inevitably bring Pakistan's now traditional and sole ally into the reckoning. There are few things that the Soviet Union would wish to avoid more than a fresh confrontation with the Chinese People's Republic whatever the present political malaise in Peking. This explains the Russian emphasis upon a political settlement to Bangla Desh and the call upon the Pakistan Government to restore the country to a state where refugees can feel free and unafraid to return. Mrs. Gandhi may have hoped for more from the Russians.

THE TORONTO TELEGRAM (Canada) September 13, 1971
EDITORIAL: THE NEED FOR ACTION IN PAKISTAN

East Pakistan needs imports of about three million tons of food grains to prevent famine, according to an American doctor who recently attended a Toronto conference that discussed the tragedy on the subcontinent. Dr. John Rhode, of the Harvard University medical school, writing in the British medical magazine Lancet, estimates that 25 million of East Pakistan's poorer people are facing starvation. Dr. Rhode spoke at the South Asia conference in Toronto last month after touring refugees camps in West Bengal and other Indian border states. He is among thousands of prominent Americans who have condemned the United States Government for continuing to deliver arms to Pakistan, arguing that this can lead only to continued civil strife in the country. It is difficult to say whether or not the figure of 25 million represents an exaggeration by a concerned U.S. citizen and doctor. But the possibility certainly exists, because within a period of less than a year, East Pakistan has been hit by the country's worst cyclone, by floods and by one of the most grisly military campaigns in the history of the subcontinent. The situation has become so critical that of East Pakistan's population of 75 million, eight million have already fled into India. It has been the greatest migration in history within a period of a mere five months. Ever since March 25, civil war has raged in the country. Crops have been neglected, roads, railways and communications cut, houses, shops and villages looted and burned. It is therefore quite obvious that dozens of millions face severe food shortages. The irony of the situation is that world surpluses of food grains, particularly rice, are growing. Japan alone has a surplus stock of rice of around 6.4 million tons, 64 per cent of which is held by the Government. Record rice crops were harvested last year in India, Indonesia, Ceylon, Cambodia, South Korea, Malaysia and South Vietnam—all nations comparatively near to East Pakistan.

The fundamental problem will be how to distribute food aid if and when it arrives in the stricken country. Even at the best of times, roads and other communications are poor.

Yet clearly the need for action in East Pakistan is urgent if the world community is to prevent yet another major disaster in this unhappy, convulsed land. The United Nations is one organisation that must involve itself more deeply in the tragedy of Pakistan in the months ahead.

THE OTTAWA CITIZEN (Ottawa) September 17, 1971
EDITORIAL : DEEP GULF AND HATRED—CAN PAKISTAN EVER BE THE SAME AGAIN ?

Today the author discusses various attitudes in Pakistan. Many countries have been split from time to time—the United States during its civil war, Nigeria during its agony. But Pakistanis seem even more deeply divided. A young Punjabi chartered accountant declares : "We have only one problem in East Pakistan—we don't have enough bullets to kill all of them India-lovers". A refugee from India, now a high government official, declares : "It's true we are ruling them as a colony now—and we will. They deserve it, after the brutalities they committed against innocent men, women and children. You wouldn't believe it. They behaved worse than animals". An East Pakistani says defiantly : "You can kill Mujib if you like. We are all Mujibs. You cannot kill us all, or rule us forever". One Bengali domestic servant took a shoe and hurled it at the screen when President Yahya Khan was addressing foreign newspaper men on television. Police were summoned and they took him away, as he kept on repeating : "Our army is being trained in India. We will soon be free". The gulf and hatred between the Pakistanis seems incredible.

The East Pakistani policemen revolted in March. When government appeals to report for duty went unheeded, a police force was shipped form West Pakistan. Labourers were shipped to work in the mills as the Bengalis deserted the cities for the countryside. So were civil servants and bureaucrats from West Pakistan. Now slowly the East Pakistanis are returning to the cities and their jobs. Some policemen are back on duty, but are not issued arms as yet. In the central government, East Pakistanis draw full pay but have been

transferred to posts where they can do little harm. These precautions seem justified for the present—an East Pakistani cook was caught not long ago mixing poison with food that was to be served in Quetta's military hospital. Hearing these stories, one wonders whether such a divided nation can ever be united except by force.

There is some optimism in West Pakistan based on the argument that West Pakistan isn't interested in exploiting East Pakistan or in denying it autonomy and that once the East Pakistanis realised that Islamabad crushed only a foreign-hatched secession movement they'd come around. Others feel the wound is now too deep to be healed. Not all West Pakistanis, however, are behind the government nor are all East Pakistanis for secession. In West Pakistan, many voices were raised before March 25 against any tough action. Admiral S.M. Ahsan, former commander-in-chief of the Pakistan navy, warned President Yahya that armed action in East Pakistan would be immoral and in the long run unworkable. He was removed as governor. Lt.-General Yakub similarly was replaced. Air-Marshal Nur Khan, former air force commander became deputy martial law administrator and West Pakistan governor when General Yahya became president. He later resigned. One day after Yahya postponed the assembly session, Nur said : "The president must call the session again in March, otherwise irreparable damage will be done. The president is being wrongly advised by a highly placed person. If change of power does not take place, West Pakistan will always have army rule". Air-Marshal Asghar Khan, former air force commander, said on March 6 : "Power should immediately be transferred to Mujib. Our hearts are crying with tears of blood for the people in East Pakistan". On March 12 Major-General Sher Ali Khan, former information minister in Yahya's cabinet, cabled the president urging him to do nothing which would leave him with "the blame for putting an end to this Islamic republic". On March 20, five days before the armed action in East Pakistan, the minority parties in West Pakistan held a convention at Karachi and the 40 members-elect of the National Assembly "endorsed the demand for withdrawal of martial law and transfer of power to the public representatives".

The Pakistan Students' Association of America on April 4 called for establishment of democracy throughout Pakistan, withdrawal of army from the cities, release of Mujib and the formation of government by the Awami League. As for the

East Pakistanis, both before and after the elections many of them had condemned the rough methods of the Awami League.

On February 1, 1970, a public meeting in Dacca was disrupted after which Pakistan Democratic Party president Nurul Amin, who was later elected to the assembly, said: "I have no words to condemn such activities by the Awami League which, it is clear, has planned the fascist methods to impose their plan on others. This is not the first occasion the Awami League has adopted this policy". The league ran a highly provocative election campaign. At one public meeting, East Pakistan Awami League General Secretary Tajuddin Ahmed said: "The flesh and blood of the Bengalis had been swallowed up by the exploiters and dacoits all these years. They must be wiped out from the body politic of the country through the ensuing polls". After the election, power could have come to Awami League if they had displayed wisdom or even flexibility. But they became adamant and must share the blame for what happened.

Yahya after the election invited all major leaders for talks. Mujib's refusal not only aroused suspicions in West Pakistan about his motives, but it also gave Mujib's rival Bhutto a monopoly over Yahya's ears. While this does not justify Yahya's following Bhutto's advice, it helps explain why things happened the way they did. Yahya, by most accounts, blundered in postponing the assembly session. But East Pakistan's vehement reaction made Yahya reconsider and on March 3 he invited 12 elected members of parliamentary groups in the assembly to meet at Dacca to solve the crisis. Mujib refused.

On March 6 Yahya announced the session would take place on March 25. Mujib listed four demands, including the immediate transfer of power to the elected representatives at both the central and provincial levels, before he would consider whether to attend.

In despair, Yahya flew to Dacca for talks with Mujib. Even the East Pakistanis working in the President's house were on strike and Yahya reportedly had an uncomfortable time. But though he conceded the six points of the Awami League, he received fresh demands, including the one changing Pakistan from a federation to a confederation of sovereign states. The atrocities against Urdu-speaking civilians in East Pakistan before March 25 and after turned West Pakistani public opinion against the Bengalis. These were not

reported in the Western press, probably because they took place in the interior while the western correspondents were covering the Yahya-Mujib talks in Dacca. The Pakistani government also suppressed the news initially to prevent retaliation against the Bengalis in West Pakistan.

If there was a conspiracy, the Awami League played right into the hands of the conspirators. A little flexibility and statesmanship would have brought them power and the chance to implement their programme and it would have prevented the butchering of hundreds of thousands of Bengalis and non-Bengalis. Whether Pakistan can ever be the same again now nobody knows.

THE DAILY AL BILAD (Jeddah) September 17, 1971
EDITORIAL: HONOUR FOR PAKISTAN.

It is a great honour for Pakistan that of all the countries Mujibur Rahman's secessionists contacted Israel for assistance. The party who does not find help but from sources like Israel, is well-known throughout the world that it is a tail to the colonisation and racialism. It is a party whose endeavour has failed and whose merchandise remained unused, and its wind will blow out shortly because bankruptcy in the beginning results necessarily to bankruptcy at the end. I hesitated much before commenting on news reports, received yesterday, about the arrival of an envoy of the secessionists of Mujibur Rahman in Israel to seek assistance from the Israelis—the enemies of humanity, Arabs and Islam. But the fact that the envoy held a press conference in Jerusalem alongwith Mardakhay Shnorson and Saul Karif from Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has removed every doubt from my mind, and ascertained this tragedy.

The Israeli authorities not only received Mahmoud Qassim, the representative of Bangla Desh, but also invited him to revisit Israel whenever possible. In the meantime they have promised to help him, the fact which let him

declare to the representatives of the press that what he has seen and heard from the Israelis was over his imagination. The Arabs, from the very beginning, aligned themselves against the secessionists as if they were aware through the sixth sense that the one who is dishonest to the unity of his nation will certainly contact Israeli or similar other parties one day. It is useless to report to the readers what this erring secessionist said about the benefits of cooperation with Israel, and that the religion according to his knowledge, should not interfere with policy and consequently it should not be an obstacle to such cooperation. And if enemies seek help from Israel for causing harm to Pakistan, then it is a badge of honour which encircles the chest of this huge Muslim country which has never abandoned any of the Arabs' cases and which showed excellent position towards the Palestine case without caring for threats or pressures.

We, the Arabs, are indebted to Pakistan for extending permanent moral support even at a time when its relations with some of the Arab states were not on an even keel. This support enraged Israel against Pakistan and its Muslim people, and for this reason Israel is sympathetic to the secessionists. Now Israel has made an effort to repay in the same coins, but Pakistan, which could not be prevented from supporting the Arabs even by forces bigger than Israel, will not pay any attention to the Israel's promised assistance to the secessionists. This is a move aimed at splitting the Muslims but it will not serve the secessionists, the enemies of the Umma. The so-called Mahmoud Qassim lived in Teheran for the last fifteen years, after which period the Iranian Government expelled him. He then left for Geneva, where, undoubtedly, the Israeli intelligence got in touch with him and arranged for his journey to Tel Aviv. Perhaps this adventurer, it will be discovered, is representing only himself, but even in this case our opinion about the secessionists will not change: that they are the people who are harming themselves before doing any harm to Pakistan.

THE DAILY AYANDEGAN (Teheran) September 19, 1971

THE POLITICAL SOLUTION FOR PAKISTAN

By Homayoun Daryoush

News from Pakistan has lately been more encouraging. After the appointment of a Bengali—Dr. Abdul Malik—as the East Pakistan Governor in place of Lt.-Gen. Tikka Khan, now a 10-man cabinet, including some members of the Awami League, has been constituted to administer the Government. The army and the Martial Law Administration headed by Lt.-Gen. A. K. Niazi, have been instructed only to assist the civilian Government. In addition to this, President Yahya Khan has announced general amnesty for all those accused of committing atrocities during March 1 and September 5 this year and as a result, a large number of Bengali police and military personnel have also been released.

The political solution of East Pakistan begins right from here—appointing a civilian cabinet, abolition of military rule, keeping the military in the distant background, release of the political prisoners and, finally, entrusting the Government to the representatives of the people. Although Yahya Khan's difficulties are not few, yet he is, apparently, following this path. First of all, there are several elected Awami League members who migrated to India and are, now, finding their way of return barred. And, there is the need for joint efforts by more than one government in the sub-continent to make them return to their homes. The convening of a National Assembly session, having Awami League majority from the East Wing and the People's Party from the West (led by Bhutto) will be the most dangerous phases to get through. It was in the elections to this parliament that the seed for the future problems was sown. Mujib's Awami League won all the East Wing seats, excepting a few ones, without its getting a single vote from the West Wing. The West Wing parties too, did not secure a single seat in East Pakistan, although one of them, to the surprise of all, managed to obtain majority in West Pakistan. Just this fact that the National Assembly, divided as it is in two groups, clearly shows the

peculiarity of the "National Assembly" and makes it future less optimistic. To these difficulties must be added the issue of a large number of MNA's accused of being traitors due to participation in the activities of their now-defunct, Awami League Party. But, the general amnesty announcement by Yahya Khan has, to a large extent, solved this problem.

Despite all this, the National Assembly is the only lawful way to put an end to the emergency in Pakistan and to bring back the condition in which the Pakistanis can rebuild their country. Under those circumstances, any action making the way to reach a political solution impossible, will be tantamount to suicide. Mujibur Rahman's trial will not help, at all, to this political solution, and any encounter of the military regime with the politicians in the West Wing might bring about tragic results. Insistence upon the fact that the parties in Pakistan should give up their regional nature and have political activity and influence in both the wings is, no doubt, beneficial to the unity of the country. But it cannot be a precondition to anything—and above all, to the formation of a national government and transfer of power to the representatives of the people. The regional nature of the parties in Pakistan is the result of the developments during the past 20 years, and an alternative for the same cannot be found in a short period and that too with the help of forcible measures. This is yet another of the problems which should be solved by the Pakistanis themselves after the normalisation of the situation and the return of a spirit of compromise.

Yahya Khan has, in his capacity as a soldier and President, so far, endeavoured, more than he could be expected towards the preservation of Pakistan's unity and the return of power to the people. He arranged the first-ever general elections in Pakistan's history with a freedom worthy of praise and did what he could to meet the demands of the Bengalis on one side and the West Pakistani minority groups on the other. He disintegrated the One-Unit, according to the wishes of the people in the region, other than Punjabis, into four provinces namely Punjab, Sind, NWFP and Baluchistan. According to an observer, he presented the Prime Ministership to Mujibur Rahman in a platter. This was not Yahya Khan's fault that Mujib did not accept the power and did not want to redress the problems in a legal way, the problems through exploitation of which he managed to emerge

as a leader of the East Pakistanis and subsequently captured a majority in the National Assembly of the country. Whatever the constitution of the future Government in Pakistan, Yahya Khan's position remains secure though he himself on several occasions, has repeatedly expressed the desire to return to his military post. If some people in Pakistan are not willing to give priority to the political solution of this problem, they are not the friends of the President. On the other hand, they prefer, in the present situation, to act behind the scene temporarily, and would like their enemies to be finished by him (the President).

THE TIMES OF INDIA (Bombay) September 22, 1971

YAHYA IS UNDER PRESSURE TO STEP DOWN

Report by J. D. Singh from London

The military junta in Islamabad is deeply split and President Yahya Khan is under increasing pressure to quit, according to highly-placed Pakistani sources. Most of the junta is united behind its aim to prevent the secession of East Bengal. They are as "hawkish" as the President himself. But they have come to realise that a political settlement to prevent secession will be impossible without a change of leadership at the top. In other words, they want to make President Yahya Khan and his commander in East Bengal until recently, General Tikka Khan, scapegoats in a murky behind-the-scenes drama. The split in the junta has deepened with the conclusion of the Indo-Soviet treaty and the knowledge that China, even though it has publicly expressed its support for Pakistan, may not be quite willing to give it military aid. These sources recall that China had laid down certain impossible conditions when Pakistan asked for military assistance during the 1965 war with India.

President Yahya Khan's recent trip to Iran may not be unconnected with developments at home, the sources say. It was prompted by the President's desire to get a reaffirmation of solidarity from an ally which has helped Pakistan in the past. It is possible that Pakistan has secured Iran's backing

for its case at the United Nations and may even get military hardware on a small scale. Progressive elements in West Pakistan are certain that the army cannot keep East Bengal under its heel for long because of the difficult communication and supply lines, the increasing guerrilla activity and the hostility of almost the entire population of the province. Pakistan army officers and soldiers are fighting almost for the first time away from the comforts of their home and, since the Bengalis refuse to sell them meat and chicken, do not quite like the idea of subsisting on "dal" and "chapati". Some of them at least may also have a genuine revulsion at the mass killing of their own Muslim brethren. In the circumstances, their morale is bound to crack up sooner or later.

In West Pakistan, too, faint murmurs of rebellion are being heard. Mr. Z. A. Bhutto's threats of mass agitation may not be taken very seriously. But the widespread pent-up feeling in the country against military dictatorship has been accentuated by the hardships caused by certain recent economic measures. It will be an exaggeration to say that economic life in West Pakistan has been disrupted. But shortages of commodities specially tea have begun to make their impact felt. Pakistan normally produces 80 million pounds of tea a year, wholly for internal consumption. This year there is a shortfall of 66 per cent, and it is problematical whether the authorities will spend precious foreign exchange on buying tea in the world market.

KUWAIT TIMES (Kuwait) September 22, 1971
'OPERATION LIFELINE' DELAYED
Reuters' report from Krishna Nagar

The Indian Government's emergency relief operation to save tens of thousands of East Pakistan refugee children from dying of malnutrition is unlikely to begin for another month, according to information available here. And even then "Operation Lifeline" is expected to start functioning at only a seventh of the planned scale. Dr. A. K. Koleh, Chief Medical Officer of West Bengal's Nadia District, of which

Krishnanagar is the capital, told Reuter that he had received a letter today from the Health Ministry in Calcutta asking him to make immediate preparations to set up 15 nutritional therapy units for children in the District.

The letter set out the equipment, stores, and accommodation required for each centre, to which will be attached one doctor, four nurses and a number of paramedical staff. Dr. Koleh estimates that it would take about a month to lay the groundwork for the units. A major delay would be the 10-day holiday for Bengal's biggest Hindu festival, that of the Goddess Durga, the conqueress of evil. The letter orders the setting up of 15 centres in each of four West Bengal districts —Nadia, Murshidabad, West Dinajpur, and Malda. This accounts for 60 of the 412 centres considered necessary in West Bengal. If, according to Dr. Koleh's estimate, the 60 are going to take a month to get under way then the other 352 will take even longer to establish. The setting up of the nutritional centres is the second phase of a central government Health Ministry plan entitled "operation lifeline". The All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, UNICEF sources in Calcutta, the Health Ministry itself have all predicted widespread deaths from malnutrition unless some major child-care programme is launched soon. One British doctor working among the refugees, Dr. John Seaman, estimates that 100,000 to 150,000 children under the age of eight have already died of malnutrition and that deaths will soon occur on three to four times the scale of the Biafran disaster.

THE DAILY AL THAURA (Tripoli) September 22, 1971
EDITORIAL: SITUATION IN PAKISTAN

People of the Libya Arab Republic have supported the people of Pakistan in their hour of crisis with unmatched steadfastness and sincerity. However, it is necessary that the brotherly people of the Libya Arab Republic should know that they are not supporting their brethren in Pakistan just because they are their brethren, but because they are supporting a right and just cause. International and Zionist

propaganda consider the present crisis in Pakistan as a "golden opportunity" to eliminate Pakistan and thereby to eliminate one of the most fraternal allies of the Arabs. By their massive and vicious propaganda they succeed sometimes in creating wrong impression about Pakistan even in the minds of her sincere friends. There are some who believe that Pakistan is run by one family. Apparently these people think all the "Khans" belong to one family. The fact is that "Khans" are found all over Pakistan. The word "Khan" is used as a word of respect in referring to people and does not today even indicate the area from where a person comes, let alone his family. As most of the Muslims of the sub-continent have ancestral connections with Central Asia the use of the name Khan (which is true equivalent of the Arab word 'Sayyid') among Pakistanis themselves, and even some of the non-Muslims is very common. Many East Pakistani leaders also use this name (for example Sabur Khan, Abdul Munim Khan, etc). This is a view which can be easily arrived at just by elementary knowledge about Pakistan.

In all the four five-year plans it will be seen that the public (government controlled) sector is much larger than the private sector. It is true that Pakistan is not a communist country and has not abolished private capital. However, even private investment in Pakistan is supervised and controlled by the Government to ensure that it conforms with national economic objectives. To label Pakistan as a capitalist economy is to call black white. In order to show how West Pakistan has economically exploited East Pakistan, the anti-Pakistan propagandists have also invented their own economic figures. The fact is that East Pakistan's export earnings today are 50% of the country's earnings. East Pakistan's contribution to Central Government revenue has increased from 26.1% in 1961 to 26.3% in 1968, but her share of Central Government expenditure has in the same period increased from 38% to 53%, that is, East Pakistan contributes a quarter to the Central Government's revenues, but the Central Government spends more than half on East Pakistan. This is no favour to East Pakistan, it is merely a recognition of the fact that because of the historical, physical, and social reasons the development process is much more difficult in East Pakistan than in West Pakistan. While East Pakistan has a greater population than West Pakistan her area is only one-sixth of

West Pakistan. Moreover, East Pakistan is unfortunately more frequently hit by natural disasters, such as floods, cyclones and hurricanes, than any other place in the world.

In West Pakistan the amount of agricultural fund and mineral resources per head of population is much greater, and therefore, development potential of the western wing is higher. Despite these natural obstacles the Government of Pakistan has succeeded in reducing the economic gap between East and West Pakistan. The industrial exports of West Pakistan have to satisfy the needs of the East Pakistan's economy before earning foreign exchange in international markets. Although East Pakistan has a food deficit, this shortage is not made by spending East Pakistan's foreign earnings from jute, but it is made up by supplies of surplus food from West Pakistan which could have been sold abroad. All this is to show that the Indian accusations that West Pakistan has economically exploited East Pakistan will not stand up to objective analysis. Some sources said that the Central Government was worried that East Pakistan will control the government after the elections. If this was so, why did President Yahya Khan publicly announce after the elections that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will be the next Prime Minister of Pakistan? There is no doubt that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his party won 98% of the seats in East Pakistan. But, on what basis did Sheikh Mujibur Rahman win the election? Sheikh Mujibur Rahman got 47% of the whole votes cast and 20% of the Muslim votes. Did he say he was fighting the election for the secession of East Pakistan? No, his clear statement was that his six-points programme was meant to make Pakistan stronger and not weaker. Did he not accept the President's orders before the elections that all parties fighting the elections must accept two points: the first being the national integrity of Pakistan, and the second being the acceptance of the national ideology, which was the Islamic way of life? Yes. He did. But what happened after the people had given him their vote? He refused even to mention the name of Pakistan. Although it is correct that Mujib won 56% of all the seats of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman refused to even visit the western wing of the country which had elected him to be its next Prime Minister. The flag of Pakistan was torn down by the armed members of his party and replaced by the provincial flag of Bangla Desh.

The President of Pakistan tried to ignore these acts of the Awami League in the interest of national unity, and as Sheikh Mujibur Rahman refused to visit the capital, Islamabad, he himself flew three times to Dacca to come to some agreement with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. But Sheikh Mujib refused to compromise. He even refused to give a public statement assuring the people of Pakistan that he would not break up their country. He demanded power to do whatever he liked. In the meantime he had set up an independent government in East Pakistan, called the government of Bangla Desh which cut off all communication with West Pakistan. President Yahya, who was accepted as the President of Pakistan before the elections, was referred to as "our guest" by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, as if he was a foreign national. Sources said that President Yahya Khan used the time in his talks with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Dacca to secretly send troop reinforcement to East Pakistan from West Pakistan. This is pure Indian propaganda as not a single soldier was sent to East Pakistan before the crisis broke on March 25. In any case with Sheikh Mujib temporarily controlling everything in East Pakistan it would have been impossible to land troops secretly without his knowing about it. In addition to defiance of his President and his determination to break up Pakistan against his own electors' wishes (who it may be repeated voted for his social and economic programme and not for the end of Pakistan), Sheikh Mujib's party began a campaign of pure terror against the millions of Moslem refugees who settled in East Pakistan in 1947 to escape Hindu fanaticism. This time their fate was worse than in 1947. They were simply massacred in the most shameful way, men, women and children, in fact, as if they were snakes or rats.

Under these circumstances did President Yahya have any other recourse than the one he took? As President of Pakistan what was his first duty? Are there any circumstances where it is permissible for a President to agree to the disintegration of his country without the people desiring it? If so, then President Yahya and his Government are to blame. If not, the least we can expect from our friends is to refrain from swallowing every propaganda without even caring to study the situation. As for the reports of army brutality and mass killings it is a fact that none of the reporters saw anything for himself but always quotes "reliable sources". How

do journalists sitting in Calcutta knew what's happening in East Pakistan ? To some of our Arab friends who have been taken in by the BBC campaign against Pakistan, all that can be said is that if you can rely on the BBC for news of the Middle East then certainly also rely on them for news on Pakistan. But if you know that the BBC and the western news represent the Zionist view of events in the Middle East how can you accept their word for events in East Pakistan where none of them saw what was happening ? Sitting in Calcutta, relying on Indian interpreters for their conversation with refugees and competing with each other for dramatic news stories to boost their papers' readership, can one honestly expect these journalists to give a fair picture ? Did they do so in the Nigerian crisis ? A small example will show the quality of the news which the sources seem to have read or been supplied with. Up to now the international (Zionist) news has referred to the figure of "eight million refugees" without any qualification. It is accepted as a fact, it is regarded as so obvious that no time is wasted in explaining how it was arrived at or where the figure came from. This figure has been believed by some friends of Pakistan despite the fact that Pakistan has published the results of a thorough enquiry of the number of refugees which shows that the exact figure is two million. But the volume of propaganda from the BBC, Voice of America, the western and Zionist sources is louder and more impressive. As a result Pakistan has formally asked the United Nations to conduct an independent inquiry into the number of refugees in India and also publish the results of the enquiry. The western media have immediately realised the significance of Pakistan's request and knowing that the U.N. enquiry will support Pakistan's estimate of two million refugees have now begun to refer to the of "eight million" as "Indian estimates".

Until now they conveyed the impression that they had themselves verified the figure and thence was no further point of disputing them. Well, if this basic pillar in the propaganda was against Pakistan it is so rotten that it crumbles on the first examination. We can safely leave it to our friends to decide what would happen to those propaganda themes against Pakistan when they are in turn subjected to objective examination?

London, Sep. 21 (AP)-Diplomatic sources of two countries reported tonight that President Mohammad Yahya Khan of Pakistan may be ready to authorise negotiation with imprisoned Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for settlement of terms in the East Bengal crisis.

The Pakistan High Commission in London could not be reached for comment on the report which, if confirmed, would represent a retreat by the Pakistani President.

As the informants portrayed the situation, General Yahya would insist as a precondition that any arrangements giving the East Bengalis the autonomy they have claimed would have to be within the framework of a united state of Pakistan. Secession or even self-determination would, in other words, be excluded.

Sheikh Mujibur is in a West Pakistan jail being tried in secret on charges that have yet to be publicly defined. He is leader of the now-banned Awami League, which won 167 of East Pakistan's 169 National Assembly seats in last December's national election.

Role Ruled Out

General Yahya branded the Sheikh a traitor to Pakistan and, therefore, according to the informants, would not personally involve himself in any negotiations with his captive.

Instead, the sources said, the President, under pressure of several friendly countries, is pondering the establishment of a civil government that would be charged with negotiating.

In the view of most London authorities, the starting point of any negotiation would have to be Islamabad's acceptance of the principle of maximum autonomy for East Bengal.

Sheikh Mujibur is thought to be about the only leader in Pakistan with enough credibility and authority to be able to sell the idea of a settlement and reconciliation to the embittered East Bengalis.

The bitterness of the East Bengalis stem from the campaign of suppression and punishment that independent authorities have said followed in the wake of the Awami League's electoral successes.

That campaign, carried out by West Pakistani troops, have taken an immeasurable toll of East Bengali lives and has sent millions of refugees streaming into India.

THE DAILY AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA (Calcutta)
September 23, 1971
PAKISTANIS FEEL YAHYA'S APPLECART WILL TOPPLE
Report by Sunder Kabadi from London

West Pakistani supporters of Yahya Khan are dismayed to learn that Bhutto has stated that Pakistani Army committed genocide in Bangladesh. That is the interpretation they have put on Bhutto's statement that he would not give opportunity to Yahya Khan to kill people in West Pakistan as he did in Bangladesh. They have also noted that since he started his dialogue with the President, Bhutto has avoided criticising Awami Leaguers of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. In fact, he has gone out of his way to offend Pakistani President by stating that he appointed his stooge, Dr. Malik as the civilian governor who has no claim to represent the people of Bangladesh. It is also recalled that earlier in the year when Yahya Khan opened dialogue with him and Sheikh Mujibur, it is Bhutto who suggested that he should be allowed to rule over West Pakistan and Sheikh Mujibur should be given control of East Bengal. These West Pakistanis maintain Bhutto had thus conceded the right of East Bengal to secede.

These West Pakistanis blame Yahya Khan for allowing Bhutto to grow into a monster. They fear unless their President curbed Bhutto's activities West Pakistan will soon become a cauldron which may shake the military junta. It may not be of same dimension as the one which has resulted in creation of Bangladesh as a separate nation. But its repercussions might finally result in break up of even that part of West Pakistan with its regions wanting to be autonomous.

One West Pakistani who is here for medical treatment for the past three months commented, "we are on the edge of

yet another volcano. It may erupt any moment and it may swallow in its strides both Yahya Khan and Bhutto."

To my query how Yahya Khan can avoid the coming storm, his reply was emphatic. He asked me to read Peter Shore's views who has stated that Pakistanis are now desperate men and may find escape in having a war against India.

My knowledgeable informant thinks Pakistan's military clique is deluding itself in believing that if Pakistan declared war on India she will receive every possible aid from China. Whatever China might have said publicly to encourage Pakistan to believe that she can count on her support he has fairly good knowledge about working of the Chinese mind. He had been to Peking as well as to Moscow and he is convinced that in the last analysis neither Mao Tse tung nor Chou En-lai would like to draw chestnuts out of fire for the 23 families which control economy of Pakistan and the fate of the people of Pakistan in their hands. Moreover, if past experience is any guide to assess Chinese mind leaders in Peking have not much trust in the competence of West Pakistan to wage war against India. They are not convinced that Pakistan did not cry halt without reason of self preservation last time when Indian forces were at the gates of Lahore. And even if Chinese leadership intervened on the side of Pakistan there is no sure guarantee that Yahya will not be another Ayub to submit himself to another Tashkent.

This West Pakistani recalled with pride his early days in Uttar Pradesh where he and Indira Gandhi had played hide and seek. He said, "she is really good at this game. The treaty with Soviet Union is a master stroke and it will yield useful dividend".

I asked him how long he proposes to stay in Britain and his reply was cryptic : "as long as Allah desires me to be here to see you and other friends from India." From his chat it was obvious to me that no useful purpose would be served by his return home so long as the grip of Pakistani militarists had not been eased. In his own way he is trying to assist that process in Britain and it seems that in next two or three months the world of Yahya Khan will crash. He agrees with Peter Shore that by his stupidity Yahya Khan himself has destroyed Pakistan which Jinnah created. He would not blame the people of Bangladesh or any other external force for the eventual disappearance of the so-called Islamic State.

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BENGAL : A NEW TACK BY YAHYA

The first faint signs of what may be a retreat by President Yahya Khan of Pakistan over the Bengal question have begun to surface just as the drift toward another Indo-Pakistani war looked irreversible. Reports from wholly different quarters indicate that Yahya is contemplating a negotiation with the captive Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to establish an autonomous East Bengal within a unitary Pakistan state. By general consent Mujib is the only man with the credibility and authority to lead the embittered East Bengali people back to some semblance of normality.

His secret trial in or near Islamabad is still proceeding, but at a lower pace. According to authoritative sources, President Yahya recognises that, having branded Mujib as a 'traitor,' he himself cannot personally conduct the negotiations ; the suggestion is, therefore, that he may soon set up a civilian government in Islamabad with the specific mission of coming to terms with the prisoner from Bengal. The precondition would be, of course, an acknowledgement from Mujib and his banned Awami League that an East Bengal with maximum autonomy would still be part of a unitary Pakistan.

These reports emanate from pro-Pakistan as well as from anti-Pakistan sources. From both sides it is acknowledged that such a new tack would mark a tremendous retreat by Yahya. But his only alternative to some sort of deal with Mujib is, almost certainly, a war with India that could be totally disastrous.

The reasoning of these diverse authorities runs roughly as follows :

1. A confrontation is looming in the post-monsoon period (late October or early November) between West Pakistani troops in East Bengal and the Bangla Desh rebels.

If the West Pakistanis look like crushing the insurgents, Mrs. Gandhi's government will be under great pressure first to recognise, then to aid the rebels and, in the last resort, to intervene. This, as Yahya has said, would be a casus belli.

2. If the rebels looked like holding their own, there would be just as much pressure on the Indian government to recognise them, because they would have satisfied the normal criterion for recognition in that they would be exercising effective control over their territory. In such a situation, too, Yahya would be bound to challenge India, if he lives up to his pledges.

Many of Yahya's friends and allies from Peking, through Teheran, to Washington have been urging him quietly to settle with Mujib, if he can. The Shah of Iran, for instance, left Yahya in no doubt, when the Pakistan leader recently visited Teheran, that Pakistan could not count on military aid from the Iranians if it got into hostilities with India. Even China is believed to have given him the same kind of advice; for Peking this would be the wrong war, against the wrong enemy, at the wrong time, and in the wrong place, to coin a phrase.

As if to add insult to injury, two political parties considered loyal to Islamabad have just said they may not participate in the new East Pakistani elections due to begin on November 25. Nurul Amin, President of the Pakistan Democratic Party, has said that the election is premature, and has asked for at least a one-month deferment of voting. The Pakistan Muslim League is taking a similar line. Amin was the only national assembly man out of 169 elected in East Pakistan last December who was not a supporter of Mujib's Awami League.

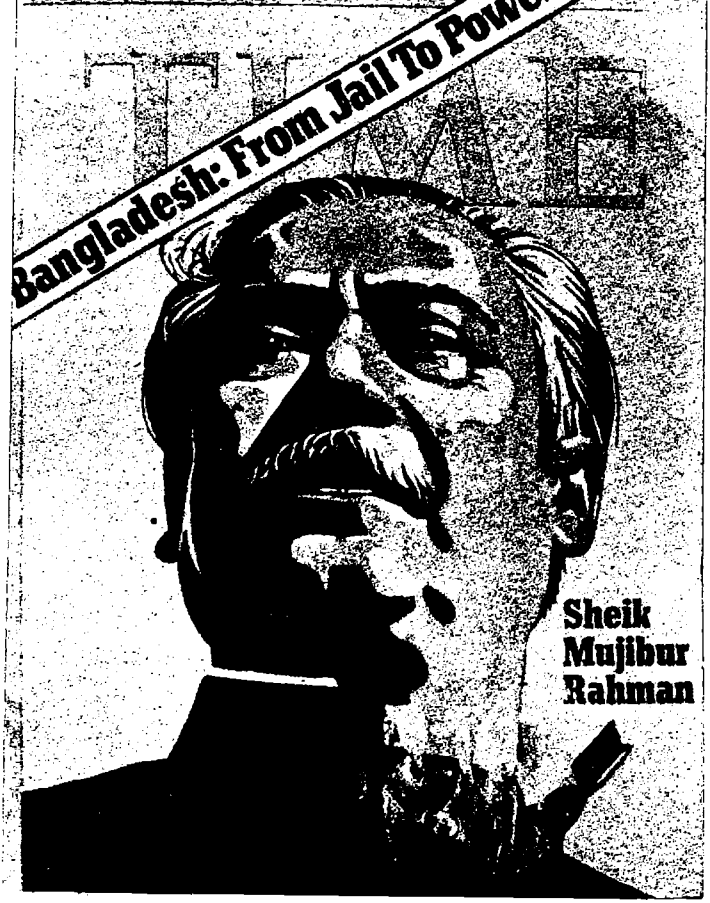
The next few weeks will therefore be crucial for Pakistan. Meanwhile, the Indian authorities, with about eight million refugees on their hands, fear that this number may well be doubled by the end of the year, if the military should resume their tough measures to root out rebel forces. Once the onset of winter halts the supply of arms from China to Pakistan, the Indians should have no military reason to fear the outcome of a conflict with their neighbour.

THE DAILY FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG
(West Germany) September 23, 1971
EDITORIAL: THE BENGAL FIRE
BY Klaus Natorp

The tragedy in Bengal continues without an end in sight. Is this really unalterable? The matter has long taken on a form which makes it impossible to describe the conflict as the "internal affair" of Pakistan. The indescribable suffering, which millions of people in Bengal are undergoing, gives the indirectly concerned parties the right to speak out. But still, what could they do?

Humanitarian aid is most important and urgent. The care of the East Pakistani refugees in India and the equally numerous afflicted and needy in eastern Bengal could still be greatly improved. But the matter should not rest there. Not only the symptoms of the crisis are to be treated, but also the root of the sickness should be cured. Two requirements are necessary for that: the internal peace in Pakistan, that means, reconciliation of the estranged wings of the state jointly formed in 1947, and the abatement of the dangerous tension, which developed during the course of the East Bengali conflict between the subcontinental neighbours, Pakistan and India. As far as the latter is concerned, lately there have been some signs of relaxation. The danger of war seems to have lessened. Of course, the sounds of fighting can still be heard on both sides, but it seems that in the meantime all responsible persons in New Delhi and Islamabad are convinced that a military confrontation would be a greater disaster for both countries than the present situation, which resulted from the violent suppression of the Bengali liberation movement.

The Indo-Soviet treaty, signed on August 9, also seem to have played a role in decreasing the danger of war. The Soviet Union would like to prevent any chaotic clashes in the immediate vicinity of her southern border, especially any kind that the Chinese could possibly benefit from. And even if at first, it seemed that Moscow biasly preferred to side with India and the movement for an independent Bangla Desh,



Cover story : 17-1-72.



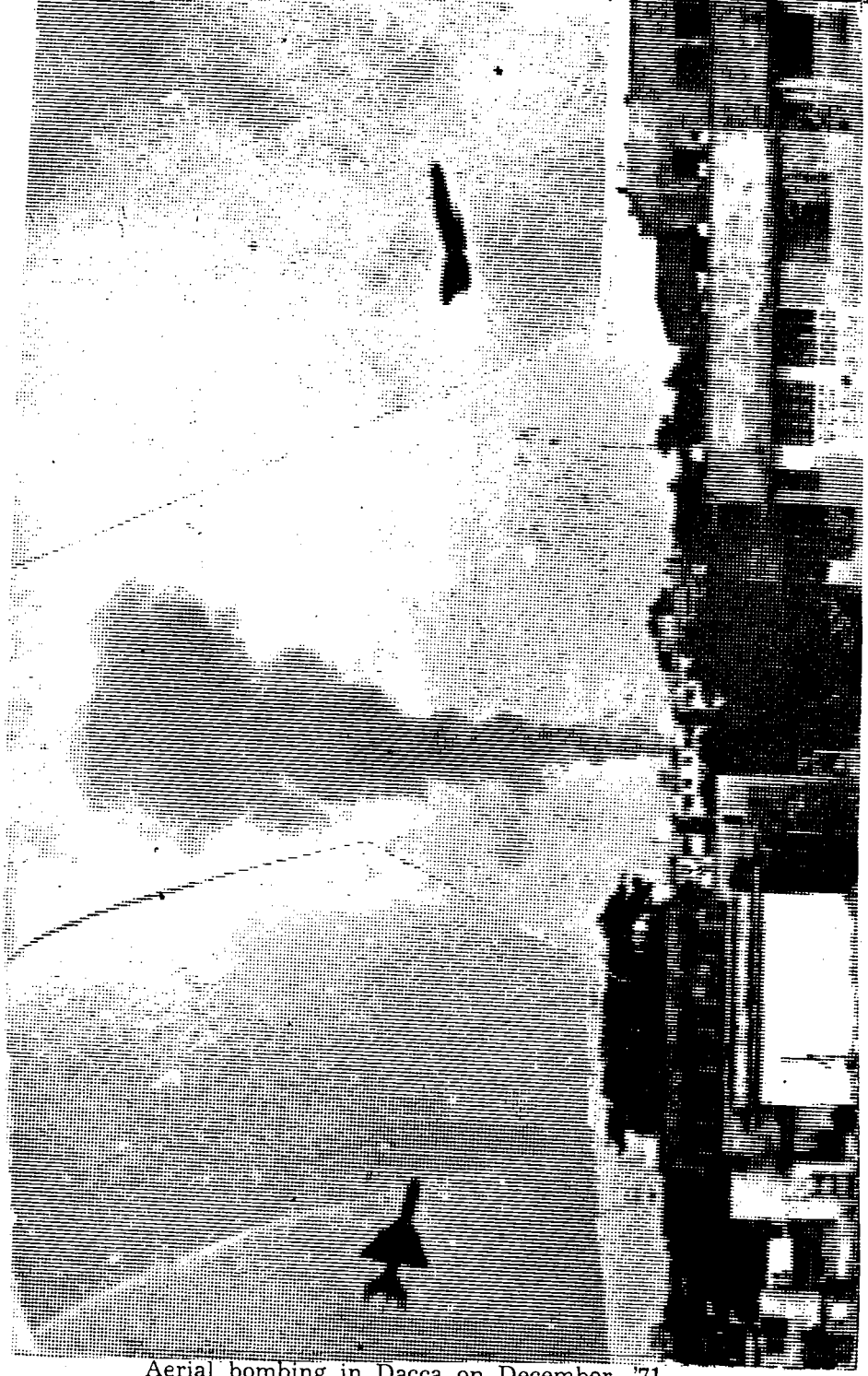
Bengali women celebrating news of Mujib's release.
Time : 17-1-72.



A 13-year old girl who was kept for months in military camp recovered after war.
National Geographic Magazine, September, '72.



A cholera victim in refugee camp being carried by her husband.
Newsweek : 2-8-71.



Aerial bombing in Dacca on December, '71.
Photo : Swapan.

which is so vehemently supported in India, it however, became soon evident, that the Soviet leaders are really trying to consequently follow equal treatment of India and Pakistan, which was initiated in 1966 in Tashkent. Moreover, just recently she announced her interest in the preservation of a stable Pakistan and even documented this position through the continuation of her development aid. This probably had a sobering effect on India. Naturally, the Indo-Soviet treaty also had a cooling effect on Pakistan. The Government in Islamabad would have to reckon with constant international involvement, if it meddles with India.

However, the danger of an armed conflict between the sub-continental states has not passed, because the origin of the tension still exists. The partisans of the East Bengal liberation movement, who mainly operate from India, are a constant vexation for Pakistan. During counterfights, border violations can easily occur, which could then result in even greater fighting. With the end of the monsoon the civil war parties will have a greater chance for advance. An increase in clashes can be expected.

Therefore, a neutral mediator is urgently needed, who could bring India and Pakistan to the negotiation table, before new critical incidents arise. On such an occasion the subject would also have to be discussed how the East Pakistani refugees could be hastened to return to their homes. Their permanent maintenance is an unbearable burden for India. Naturally, the subject of the internal situation of Pakistan would come up, thereby making it all the more difficult. Because the refugees would only return if they could be sure that they would be safe there and the West Pakistani troops would be in their barracks.

But Pakistan would not be willing to discuss the internal situation in Bengal, even with an unbiased agent. Namely, because then the Government in Islamabad would have to admit, that the reconciliation of the western wing with the eastern wing—the already mentioned number one requirement —still lies far off, if it is at all possible. The majority of the population still consider the West Pakistani soldiers as an occupation army and looks upon the civilian administration, which was appointed by them, as traitors. They offer passive and active resistance—even without Indian support. Their idol is and remains the imprisoned Sheikh Mujibur

Rahman. If he and the other leaders of the Awami League are not also included in President Yahya Khan's general amnesty, then the chances for an internal settlement are quite slight. Without a new start, it will be impossible to break through the vicious circle of military suppression, resistance, retaliation, sabotage, flight, hunger, disease and what other terrible things it may store. But so far too little has happened to encourage Pakistan to make a new start.

THE WESTERN MAIL (Cardiff) September 24, 1971

WORLD HAS NOT KEPT FAITH WITH EAST BENGAL REFUGEES

By Sunanda Datta Ray

As the six-month period set by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for the return of the East Bengal refugees draws to an end, India's harassed relief officials are battling desperately against world indifference and heavy monsoon floods. Five and a half million of the official total of nine million refugees have been cut off from all supplies of food, medicines and clothes. Even the distribution of rapidly vanishing local stocks is becoming almost impossible in the waterlogged terrain. There is desperation in the stench that envelops the refugee camps; in the helplessness of 800 young doctors and their 2,000 medical assistants who complain that dispensaries are running out of drugs for the two most prevalent diseases, gastro-enteritis and scabies; and in the forced reduction of the rice dole from 400 grammes to 350 grammes. Thousands of skeletal shacks of bamboo are without tarpaulin or polythene covering.

Famine is not an immediate danger but officials fear another outbreak of cholera, which affected 60,000 people in May and June, taking nearly 6,000 lives. The new danger arises less from insanitary camp conditions than from a fresh influx: Pakistani reprisals after attacks by the Mukti Bahini guerrilla fighting for the independence of East Bengal have brought an additional 16,000 refugees from the Sylhet district to the hills of India's Meghalaya state. Many of them arrived

stricken with cholera—the incubation period is a week—but relief headquarters in Calcutta is unable to fly out a much-needed cargo of vaccines to Gauhati in Assam, which is the main dispersal point for the north-east. The traditional river route from Calcutta to Gauhati was closed by Pakistan during the 1965 war with India.

The world has not kept faith with the refugees. The actual aid received is less than a tenth of the amount promised by the nations of the world. Though the daily influx of refugees dropped from 34,000 in August to 26,000 in September, planners who had earlier expected—somewhat optimistically as it turns out—that the problem would disappear by the end of the month are now busy drawing up a budget and a programme of action for the next six months. That the relief effort has survived at all against such tremendous odds is a miracle. But there is a new-found hope in camps that is totally at variance with the squalid surroundings. Only wrinkled old men, womenfolk and the children remain: young men are leaving refugee camps in droves to join the Mukti Bahini. In a camp for 5,000 people I saw rows of neat little shops with pathetic little fish and lotus stalks—which the local people eat—laid out for sale. Young boys were busy weaving fishing nets and a bent old woman chased us insisting, with the true village hospitality, that we have a nibble of the malt-flavoured milk biscuit given her by Oxfam, the the British charity.

This is refugee life at its most constructive. There are schools, weekly singsongs and cleaning operation by groups of volunteers from among the refugees. But, in those districts where camps have been cut off, life could not be more hazardous. Overflowing canals, turbulent rivers and lashing rain have in the past few weeks converted the West Bengal landscape into an angry sea of swirling brown water. The crumbling masonry of provincial towns has given way; streets are inundated; bridges have been wrenched from their supports and flung aside; roads and railway tracks swept away. West Bengal's flood death toll totals many thousands. Communications are the single most important problem that faces the relief effort. West Bengal's five northern districts—West Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri, Cooch Behar, Darjeeling and Malda; accounting for nearly 3,500,000 refugees—have been totally cut off by the angrily swelling Ganges at Farakka, 200 miles north

of Calcutta. This was also the main route to the three north-eastern states of Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura, which have together received nearly two million refugees. Calcutta is the principal supply base for all these areas and, unless communications are quickly restored, the 400 refugee camps there (out of a total of 940 in five states) will soon run out of stocks of food, medicines, clothes and building materials.

The desperation of the situation has forced Oxfam—five of whose trucks are stranded by water—to charter an aeroplane to airlift essential drugs, but the one company that enjoys a monopoly of this route—flying ramshackle old Dakotas, many of which are relics of World War II—has callously taken advantage of the crisis to raise its charter rate to Agartala, Tripura's capital. Indian Air Force planes have already made a dozen sorties on missions of mercy to Gauhati but this is not enough. Oxfam's regional director, Julian Francis, says that he expects to spend about £634,000 by the end of this year on East Bengal refugees. But Oxfam is also embarking on a £42,000 relief project for floods in Bihar and to keep costs down Francis sent out three vehicles last week, each laden with nine tons of high-protein food, medicines and clothes on an experimental and circuitous route to avoid the floods.

Time is running out. The worst phase of the monsoons may now be over but storage facilities have always been inadequate in the north and north-east and supplies are running dangerously low. Nearly 230 Japanese trucks given by the United Nations have been lying idle with their distinctive markings in a Calcutta street for the past 20 days because of the condition of the roads. It has become impossible amid such widespread misery to tell the newcomer from the native peasant. Draped in the same grimy rags, both are equally homeless. Where the raised tarmac of a road still winds its way through the flood waters they have camped on it, huddled in a mass of hungry, rain-sodden humanity along the 40 miles to the town of Bongaon on the Pakistan border.

An Indian Roman Catholic priest, Father Joe d'Souza, says that he can now visit only three out of the 17 refugee camps that he was looking after; the others have either been completely submerged or are inaccessible. The Catholic voluntary organisation, Caritas, has promised Father d'Souza some money and he is trying to buy a fleet of country boats

to re-establish contact with his uprooted and dispossessed parish. The main relief effort continue in spite of these drawbacks and Colonel P.N. Luthra, the Indian officer in charge of operations, claims that relief has emerged from its earlier haphazard work into a coherent pattern. There is a swift efficiency nowadays about at least the first stages of the process. Refugees are inocluated, vaccinated, cross-examined for possible Pakistani agents, registered and given their dole and other cards within three days of arrival in India. The second step is to get together the inmates of small and scattered camps and consolidate them in large shanty towns, each housing about 100,000 people. Jalpaiguri's 54 original camps have already been reduced to 22 and the target is to regroup all the district's refugees in only 12 camps. Col. Luthra's argument for large establishment on high ground away from main roads is that they will reduce overheads and make medical care and distribution of supplies simpler. The snag is that there will be neither food nor medicines to hand out unless foreign aid is more substantial. Even more uncertain is the projected third phase of the process, which is the evacuation of the big consolidated camps now coming into being for return to East Bengal : by the present look of things Col. Luthra, who is still a comparatively young man, will have retired from the service before the refugees return.

FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW September 25, 1971
PAKISTAN : STAR IN THE WEST

Karachi : In the past Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto has flourished on dilemmas. This time it is different. The brittle, unpredictable, intensely power-conscious politician from Sind now faces a situation where he will either go all the way to the top or be thrown all the way out.

The Awami League's emergence after the December election as a solid party commanding absolute majority in the national assembly had upset Bhutto as much as it had upset army hawks in Islamabad. It has since become common role

in liquidating the effects of that election in East Pakistan and handing the province over to the predatory troops.

When President Yahya Khan announced a general amnesty earlier this month. Bhutto was again deeply disturbed. His worry was whether Sheikh Mujibur Rahman would be among those released, for only if the Sheikh continued to remain outside the political picture would he, Bhutto, be the undisputed leader of the national assembly to be called upon to form a government as and when power is transferred to civilian hands.

Bhutto has left little doubt about his impatience. While other political party leaders are against any transfer of power by the military until such time as it is possible in both wings of the country simultaneously, Bhutto wants it now. And he wants it to be "full, complete and total". If the military is not willing to do so, he has threatened to launch a mass movement in the western wing for the vindication of people's rights, as he puts it.

Bhutto's hurry may at least in part be due to his realisation that his People's Party is facing a threat of disintegration. Wealthy landlords vie with peasants' and workers' leaders for leverage in its top echelons. Differences came sharply into focus early this year when Bhutto suspended from party membership Sahibzada Ahmed Raza Qasuri, a young lawyer who was a student hero and who had been elected to the national assembly as a People's Party candidate from near Lahore. Another recent defector was Mukhtar Rana, a prominent labour leader from Lyallpur.

There is considerable coffee-house discussion here over whether the military government will yield to the pressure tactics of Bhutto. Perhaps a way out will come automatically following the government's decision to adopt a constitution drawn up by "experts" and hold by-election in East Pakistan.

If Bhutto still insists on agitation, an ugly situation could result. Even popular backing for a movement led by him cannot be taken for granted. True, there is widespread desire for parliamentary democracy and an end to martial law, but, after all, the People's Party polled only 35% of the votes in December; more than 60% going to rightist parties.

Bengali Plans

By T. J. S. George

Hong Kong: The skies over Bengal will be dry again by next month. Tanks can move again, aircraft can fly and troops get around. Just before the onset of the monsoon, the military authorities had struck hard and rapidly to secure the border towns which had been under rebel control. When the rainy season ends, they are likely to fan out with equal speed in mopping up operations.

This possibility lends an enigmatic aura to the claim being made by "official" representatives of Bangla Desh—travelling Awami League members of parliament or defected diplomats —that their struggle will be carried to a successful military conclusion by the year's end. The only safety clause they admit is that either Bangla Desh will be free in the next two or three months or the struggle there will turn into a long guerrilla war of attrition.

This is not entirely wishful thinking. Five thousand extremely well trained guerrillas have entered the battle during the past month or so supplementing though with outdated arms, the 10,000 members of the former Bengal Regiment and East Pakistan Rifles still active inside the country.

The Bangla Desh "government" (location unknown) also is pushing through an intensive programme of military training for what may eventually turn out to be a "regular army" of 60,000 to 70,000 men. These personnel come almost exclusively from the ranks of the refugees, now officially estimated by the Indian side at 8.5 million, and by the Pakistan at around two million.

The freedom fighters will be only as effective as their weapons. But on this score the Bangla Desh leaders are full of confidence. Arms, they say, are no problem. They cite the substantial funds collected by overseas Bengalis, the availability of modern weapons on the commercial market and the willingness of some countries like Israel to help them. They do not mention it, but the "reliable rear area" of India must also be a major factor in these calculations.

Logical as most of these calculations are, it is difficult to imagine the West Pakistani military ordering an about turn

in East Pakistan. Latest moves suggest a plan to impose a civilian administration under whose cover the military can continue to rule. The recently appointed civilian governor has picked a 10-man caretaker cabinet and by-election have been scheduled in the eastern wing for the last week of November. By then the government-drafted constitution will be ready.

These moves will only make the Bengali more bitter ; they don't recognise Governor A. M. Malik as one of them, the cabinet consists of hated members of rightist parties trounced in the election, the by-elections are for seats arbitrarily denied to elected members of the Awami League.

What could help the freedom fighters still more, however, is unrest in West Pakistan. The Bengali struggle may slowly be having an effect on tribal movement for autonomy in the western wing. The Khaiber Mail recently reported the activities of the Baluchistan national front for liberation, Kabul (Afghanistan) Radio recently broadcast a report about mammoth meetings by Pathans demanding a sovereign Pakthoonistan.

Perhaps more significant politically is the growing unrest among workers and students in the urban areas. For the moment they seem to be looking to the effervescent Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto to lead them to the promised land.

Bhutto is manoeuvring. He is still believed to be on friendly personal terms with his cocktail companion, President Yahya Khan, and was recently credited with the suggestion that Yahya become the "national Prime Minister". On the other hand, he is cementing his relations with the younger middle-ranking officers who are known to be disenchanted with the old men at the top.

It would not be beyond imagination for Bhutto to consider the possibility of a coup d'etat using the younger officers for the principal thrust and perhaps Yahya as a temporary unifying symbol.

If Bhutto gets into the driver's seat, he can be expected to go to any length to hold on to East Pakistan. But others could intervene—a decision by the younger officers not to continue military repression in the east, a well-timed military move by India, a decisive strike by the Bengali forces themselves at the right moment.

The very fact that talk of all kinds of possibilities has started in West Pakistan is significant. There have even been public demands by some leaders for an end to the excesses in the eastern wing. By any reckoning, October-November could be a decisive period for Pakistan.

Fighters of Darkness
By Matt Franjola from Calcutta

The guerrilla bands of the Mukti Fouj (freedom fighters) have become the armies of the night in East Pakistan. The army is in control of the 78 major towns and most of the larger villages, but—especially in the province of Tippera and Noakhali southeast of Dacca—the guerrillas are getting stronger. Hit-and-run tactics and sabotage threaten the West Pakistani army's communications; in this way, the people of "Bangla Desh" hope to erode the western wing's dominion over them. The Mukti Fouj effectively control the narrow corridor between Noakhali and the port of Chittagong; and bands in Sylhet, Rangpur and Chittagong less strong, have harassed the army there.

Most guerrilla bases are inside East Pakistan, a few groups operate from the Indian side of the border. The bases reflect their determination. "A" camp is a base for former East Pakistan Rifles militiamen, surrounded by lush green jute fields and hidden in a grove in East Pakistan. A young guard snaps to attention at the bamboo gate.

A small Bangla Desh flag hangs from the eaves of one of two long thatched huts in the camp. Inside the huts, about 250 men in sarongs sleep on woven mats laid over the hard packed earth. Near each man lies his weapon, uniform and assorted personal gear. Each hut is 80 feet long by 20 feet wide and sleeps about 60 men.

The camp motor pool also has a sentry, guarding two jeeps, one truck and two farm tractors, all of which have been taken from East Pakistan civil or military forces. Several large tents in the centre of the camp constitute the headquarters area and the officers' quarters, equipped with old tables and chairs. There is a dispensary, looked after

by the camp's doctor, Abdul Mannan. "It was only after the events of March 25 that these men revolted," Dr. Mannan explained. "Only after the Pakistani army attacked the Bengali police and the East Pakistan Rifles headquarters in Dacca and killed large numbers of people did they kill their West Pakistani officers and begin their resistance".

The camp is clean, and there is good discipline. At six in the morning the men line up and those on patrol that day are briefed—standing to attention as a sergeant reads the names and mission assigned to each man. A pep talk follows, in which the men are exhorted to remember they are fighting for independence and must make great sacrifice.

Patrol leave the camp twice a day, at daybreak and dusk. Most forays last 12 hours, but intermittently there are forays deep into territory controlled by the Pakistan army, and these take four or five days. Each rebel unit consists of about 20 men, but it may be split into smaller groups in the field for some missions. One group will be assigned to watch for Pakistan army patrols which could threaten the camp. The main patrols seek out small army forces or single vehicles on the roads. They may plant mines, but their main tactic is the ambush.

Two former Pakistani artillerymen who have defected Kamuj Jaman, 24, a veteran of the Indo-Pakistan war was in Kashmir, and Sadar Ali, 22, who had three years' army experience, estimate the men in their camp "have killed more than 200 Pakistanis in the last three months". This figure is probably inflated since most of the fighting takes place at night when it would be difficult to count the number of dead. A close estimate would be about 50 killed—probably fewer. In Vietnam it is assumed that two men are wounded for every man killed. And it is unlikely these fighters, poorly equipped, could have put a 600-man battalion out of commission.

"We get most of our new arms and ammunition from Pakistan army dead and wounded," Kamuj Jaman said. "The Mukti Fouj area headquarters periodically sends us supplies too". There is not a lot of ammunition in the camp, and two men with quartermaster experience keep strict account of all supplies. The ammunition given to each patrol are carefully noted and have to be turned in on completion of the mission, Dr. Mannan commented, "there is not enough ammunition to

mount any large attacks, but for guerrilla tactics it is sufficient. The patrols are lightly armed with British submachine guns, old Enfield rifles and some light machine-guns. Occasionally a group has two-inch mortars, and there are also some anti-tank bazookas that are used against bunkers.

Some men in handcuffs, alleged to be spies for the Pakistan army, were in the camp. Dr. Mannan said local villagers had reported seeing them leading an army patrol through a guerrilla minefield. The men had confessed to being members of the Moslem League and the Jamat-i-Islam Party but denied they were involved in any of the killing and looting done by League people. They insisted they were farmers and had been forced by the army to show them through the mines. According to Mannan: "the men will probably not be shot but will be given a chance to prove their loyalty in battle with the Mukti Fouj. "The captives said they had not been tortured, and they were being fed the same potatoes, curry and rice as the rebels.

During the night one patrol led by Kamuj Jaman made contact with some Pakistani army troops in two bunkers in a small village about half a mile from the camp. The sporadic staccato bursts of machine gun fire could he heard for about an hour. When the patrol returned the following morning, Jaman reported "the villagers told us the Pakistanis were in some bunkers nearby. We tried to sneak up on them, but they heard something and started firing. They knew they had given away their position, so they withdrew. We fired at their noise but don't know if we hit anyone".

At present the Mukti Fouj policy is to keep up pressure on the smaller outlying army posts. As the guerrillas become stronger, they will move from the jungles into the small villages and towns and, eventually, into the cities. They count on Islamabad's financial difficulties and the over-extended supply lines to bring closer the victory in which they the 75 million people of East Pakistan can endure longer than the 100,000 West Pakistan troops stationed on their soil.

But if recent estimates are correct, 25 million of their compatriots are facing starvation. A major famine is believed by two US doctors to be around the corner—a famine which, because Islamabad refuses to acknowledge the severity of the situation, little has been done to prevent. Soon, they say, it will be too late to avert the crisis. Hoarding of foodstock is

already commonplace, prices have rocketed—and the army has taken many of the emergency stores.

People asked as Biafra surrendered whether the Nigerian government genuinely wished to make strenuous efforts to save the stubborn Ibos from famine. And the outside world may wonder how blind Islamabad really is. If these people die, the Mukti Fouj loses a third of its allies. But any such calculation by Islamabad would ignore the probability that every funeral pyre will ignite the hatred of more Bengalis. The Bangla Desh leaders have said "the time is past for any political solution.....blood is a river that can never be bridged".

THE WEEKLY NEW AGE (New Delhi) September 26, 1971

BANGLA DESH STRUGGLE: VICTORY ASSURED—NOW TASK IS TO HASTEN IT

By Prabhat Das Gupta

Last week we analysed the results of six months of fighting in Bangla Desh and found that militarily the position of the Pak army can be made untenable if the present attrition rate is stepped up. Victory is no longer in doubt; the task now is to hasten it. But to do that several pitfalls are to be avoided and several lacunae are to be made up. The most dangerous pitfall ahead is the attempt by some imperialist powers to force the leaders of the struggle into a compromise on the key question of complete independence. From some time past USA, through its various agents, has been putting pressure on the leaders of Bangla Desh to give up the demand for complete independence and settle with Yahya Khan on the basis of some measure of provincial autonomy. Some leaders of Bangla Desh who had gone weary of the struggle were inclined to pursue this proposal. But the others overruled them. The formation of the five-party cabinet consultative committee to conduct the liberation struggle finally stalled this move. The US lobby has now renewed its 'peace' offensive on a much bigger scale. Simultaneously Yahya Khan has begun his 'civilianisation' drive. The danger inherent in Yahya's recent moves are to be under-estimated and brushed

aside as moves to impress his Western masters only. These moves are very much directed at Bangla Desh and if the leaders of Bangla Desh are not careful it may very well disrupt their ranks.

Yahya tried all means to settle the Bangla Desh issue in his favour. He tried a quick military solution ; the freedom fighters got him bogged into an expensive long drawn out war. He wanted to collect a respectable number of collaborators to foist a puppet government on Bangla Desh ; but stooges were in short supply. He tried to internationalise the conflict through the UNO ; but most of the big powers refused to get involved. He threatened war on India ; the Indo-Soviet Treaty sobered him down. With all other options exhausted Yahya is now trying to reopen a dialogue with the leaders of Bangla Desh so that he can persuade at least a section of them to compromise on the basis of some measure of provincial autonomy. In this regard Yahya is ably guided and assisted by the USA, with Iran and some other countries acting as honest brokers. Yahya has taken some shrewd measures to pave the way for reopening a dialogue with the leaders of Bangla Desh. One of such measures is the recent decision to apportion 54 per cent of accruals from central taxes to East Bengal. More such measures may follow and one should not be surprised if Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is released and invited for talks.

One should not also be surprised if a stage-managed palace coup in Islamabad removes Yahya from presidentship and installs someone else in his place to create a "proper psychological atmosphere" for reopening talks with Bangla Desh leaders.

All these are likely to be on the cards to soften Bangla Desh leaders or at least a section of them to agree to give up the demand of complete independence and settle for provincial autonomy. A compromise on the key issue of complete independence is thus main danger before the liberation struggle of Bangla Desh. If this happens it will be a departure from the declaration of independence made by Sheikh Mujib before his arrest and the formal declaration of independence made at Mujibnagar on April 17. This will also violate the broadcast of the Acting President, Nazrul Islam, on June 6 and the oath to carry the fight to complete victory taken at the conference of Awami League MNAs and MPAs in early July.

But it is highly doubtful if Yahya or any of his mentors will ever succeed in pulling off such a compromise, for the wall of human corpses which now separate Bangla Desh from Pakistan can not just be washed away. And what more, the thousands of student and peasant youths who have taken up arms to win freedom are most unlikely to lay down their arms for a promise of provincial autonomy which was once made before the fateful March 25 and rejected by the leaders and people of Bangla Desh. So it may be taken that the fight will continue till victory.

To hasten victory the thousands of youngmen who are now streaming into the training camps should be given adequate training. Recruitment to the Mukti Bahini is no longer a problem for literally thousands are coming in every day. What is lacking is a proper arrangement to train them. The seriousness of this problem has been underlined by the tragic episode of a group of youngmen from Faridpur. They trekked from camp to camp for training. But each was brimful and there was no room for them. Heart-broken they went back to fend for themselves. On the way 52 of them were butchered by the Pak army. The urgent task of the moment therefore, is to open more camps to accommodate and train the thousands of youngmen who are prepared to make any sacrifice to win freedom. The second major problem is of equipment. The Mukti Bahini has now proved beyond doubt that it can hit at the enemy anywhere in Bangla Desh. But it is handicapped by lack of adequate fire power. Given better fire power Mukti Bahini is now in a position to decimate the Pak army at a rate which will soon cripple it. To hasten victory improving the fire power of the Mukti Bahini is a must. In matter of equipment the other major handicaps are transport and medical aid. Lack of adequate transport is hampering the mobility of the Mukti Bahini, some times with disastrous result. For example, the heavy casualty suffered by the Mukti Bahini at Bherigaon on July 22 was almost entirely due to lack of transport which prevented the two arms of the attacking force to synchronise their attacks. Lack of medical facilities is causing many deaths which otherwise could have been avoided.

There is hardly any first aid available to the Mukti Bahini during operation. There is no stretcher or ambulance and no base hospital. The wounded are carried on the shoulders of their comrades or on improvised stretchers

made of ropes and bamboo poles. The nearest hospital would be miles away from the place of operation. And by the time the wounded is carried to the hospital he is dead from blood letting. It goes to the credit of the boys of the Mukti Bahini that even such avoidable deaths have not affected their morale. Friends of Bangla Desh owe it to these brave boys to make better medical facilities available to them. Even a slight improvement in the present situation can save many precious lives. Lack of sufficient coordination between different fighting units is another problem which is affecting the smooth progress of the operation. Due to lack of such coordination efforts of the fighting units are sometimes wasted. Cases have also been reported when safety of fighting units was jeopardised due to lack of coordination between units operating in the same sector. The problem of better coordination is essentially a political problem of unity among different fighting units. In many places the exigencies of the situation have brought all the fighting groups together and forced them to set up joint commands. But unfortunately this is still to be the general pattern everywhere. The newly formed five-party Cabinet Consultative Committee will make a big contribution to early victory if it can enforce a united command in all the sectors.

Guerrilla warfare is essentially a political warfare in which proper political motivation of the fighters and the people is indespensible for victory. Unfortunately this has remained a weak spot of the Bangla Desh struggle till today. The chief motivation of the fighters and the people till today is hatred of the enemy, of the West Pakistani Punjabi army to be more precise. Hatred in a people's war is sacred. It comes from a deep love for one's own people and gives one the grit and determination to stick on to the end. But hatred should not be so blind as to lead one to confuse between friends and foes. All Pakistanis and all Punjabis for that matter are not the enemies of Bangla Desh. It is the feudal lords and monopolists of West Pakistan represented by the military junta that the people of Bangla Desh are fighting. It will be a folly to extend the circle of the enemy by including the common people of West Pakistan into it. The anti-imperialist content of the Bangla Desh struggle is also not properly emphasised by some of its leaders. The government and the army which are now raping Bangla Desh is supported, armed, equipped, sustained and protected by US imperialism.

But strangely enough no one has so far heard of a word of condemnation of the US imperialists from a section of the Bangla Desh leaders. On the contrary there is an attempt to sow illusions about the US government in the minds of the people of Bangla Desh.

No liberation war can be fought, let alone won, if the people are not properly educated about the enemy and its allies. Any confusion or blindness about the enemy can only lead the people into the enemy's trap. The war in Bangla Desh has been fought for six months and now with victory no longer in doubt it is essential that the leaders of the struggle spell out their objectives in some more detail so that people may know what kind of Bangla Desh they shall live in after victory is won.

Two constituents of the liberation struggle, namely the Communist Party of Bangla Desh and the National Awami Party (Muzaffar) have already announced their programmes. But such programmes are yet to come from the Awami League and the Bhashani NAP. Unless such clear programmatic declarations are made by the leading parties of the struggle the basic masses cannot be fully mobilised in the struggle. There is no doubt that the Bangla Desh is a people's struggle. But active physical participation of the masses of peasants is still inadequate. This deficiency cannot be made up unless the peasantry is roused on a programme which they will consider their own. These are some of the major weaknesses of the struggle which need immediate attention by the leaders. The people of Bangla Desh are now on their way to victory. The sooner these weaknesses are remedied the quicker will be the victory.

U.S. DIPLOMATIC MESSAGES : RTT File, September 28, 1971

U.N. HEARS APPEALS FOR POLITICAL SOLUTION IN EAST PAKISTAN by Richard Carl, IPS United Nations Correspondent.

United Nations, Sept. 28, 1971—A policy of restraint and a search for political solution are the recommendations repeatedly being made in the U.N. General Assembly to end the conflict troubling East Pakistan and threatening the rest of the Indian subcontinent.

In the first two days of the Assembly's Annual General Debate, four nations—Sweden, France, Iran and the Soviet Union have urged the Government of Pakistan to pursue that course.

French Foreign Minister Maurice Schuman praised the United Nations' humanitarian effort to help the East Pakistanis victimised by the conflict, as well as international response in money and supplies that have supported that effort.

But, he said, the flow of refugees out of East Pakistan can be neither stayed nor reversed "if the wrong is not righted at the root".

It must be hoped, Mr. Schuman said, "that a political and constitutional solution based on the consent of the Pakistani people will make it possible to come out of the crisis."

"For, if the tension is not relieved soon, we will have to expect tragic consequences for peace in Pakistan and in the sub-continent."

Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, calling the present situation "acute," asked for "reason and restraint" by all countries in the region.

'The flow of refugees into India has generated some serious difficulties and problems," the Soviet leader said, "and they are not only economic ones." "His Government is convinced," Mr. Gromyko said, "that a general detente in the region can be achieved only through a political settlement of the question which have arisen in East Pakistan."

"And that is something in which all the states of the region should be interested."

"The refugees should be returned to East Pakistan but this would become possible only when their security is guaranteed there".

Foreign Minister Krister Wickman of Sweden told the Assembly that "even if none of the states involved desires a conflict, we cannot overlook the risk that the severe human suffering and the serious tensions might lead to a further developing of the crisis."

Mr. Wickman appealed to the Government of Pakistan "to show moderation and restraint in order to bring an end to the violence in East Pakistan".

Iran's Foreign Minister, Abbas Ali Khalatbari said, "his government is confident that the Pakistani Government will do its utmost to eleminate, through peaceful means, the causes of friction in East Pakistan."

"In a highly sensitive area such as East Pakistan, with its potential for broader confrontation," Mr. Khalatbari added, "every effort has to be made to normalise relations between Pakistan and India."

THE SCOTSMAN (Edinburgh) September 28, 1971
RELEASE OF SHEIKH MUJIBUR PREDICTED
By Malcolm M. Browne From Karachi

Pakistani newspapers predicted today that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the detained Bengali leader, would be released on parole soon to visit his ailing parents in East Pakistan. Sheikh Mujibur was arrested in the East Pakistani capital of Dacca on March 26 when the Pakistani Army moved to crush the Bengali separatist movement there. He is facing a secret military trial on charges of "waging war against Pakistan". There has been persistent speculation here during the last two weeks that Sheikh Mujibur would be freed as part of a political settlement of the East Pakistan problem. Significantly, the Government have not censored such speculation in the Press and have not denied or otherwise discouraged it. Last week, Sheikh Mujibur's wife called on East Pakistan's new civilian Governor, Dr. A.M. Malik. Without citing sources, newspapers said that she was expected to visit Rawalpindi soon to present a petition to President Yahya Khan asking him to spare her husband's life "on humanitarian grounds".

THE CANBERRA TIMES (Canberra) September 29, 1971
PAKISTANI VISIT TO IRAN SET PUZZLE
By Ralph Joseph

Is President Yahya Khan planning another big military sweep through East Pakistan to clear the countryside of guerrillas before getting on with his plans for by-elections in

the province ? This seems the likeliest moment, with the monsoons now over and the pressure building up even in the west wing for the transfer of power to the civilians. President Yahya's sudden one-day trip to Teheran recently is still wrapped in mystery, but if he came here to ask the Shah for support, moral or otherwise, for a second large-scale military operation in the eastern province, there are no indications that he got it. The Persian monarch, who tried his hand earlier in the summer at mediation between India and Pakistan, is believed to be in favour of a political settlement with the Bangla Desh rebels in East Pakistan. The joint communique issued at the end of Yahya's visit, of course, gave no such impression. If anything, its mention of "continued mutual support" seemed to throw the scent in quite the opposite direction.

World-wide speculation about a Soviet-inspired mediation attempt only helped to deepen the mystery. Mrs. Indira Gandhi is not known to be planning a trip to Teheran for the 25th centenary of the founding of the Persian monarchy. The guest list shows it is the Indian President V.V. Giri who is scheduled to be here. Besides, the earlier mediation bid this summer is reported to have broken down, after former Iranian Foreign Minister Ardeshir Zahedi visited Islamabad and Indian Industries Minister Moinul Haq later visited Teheran. There was then some talk of the possible arrival here of Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh, but he never turned up. Instead former Pakistan Foreign Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto did, but there was no hint, official or otherwise, that his trip had anything to do with the Iranian mediation effort, though as a personal friend of the Shah he was treated as a special guest at Saadabad Palace.

In fact, it may not have been purely coincidental that as long as Dr. Henry Kissinger was "in" Pakistan, Mr. Bhutto extended his stay in Teheran. In both cases, curiously, sudden stomach upsets were given as the reasons. How much Yahya had to do with keeping anti-American Bhutto out of the country while he was arranging Dr. Kissinger's trip to Peking may come to light later. In any event, Mr. Bhutto's sojourn accomplished no obvious purpose. Mr. Bhutto's visit was followed in August by that of the head of the Pakistan Foreign Office, Sultan Mohammad Khan (no minister, incidentally: Yahya has no Cabinet). Sultan was here to attend what was described as a routine meeting of Pakistani ambassadors in

the Middle East. About the same time the ambassador to Baghdad defected. He was not at the meeting. Asked to comment on the defection, Sultan Khan, in obvious embarrassment, told a reporter he would "rather not". There was also to be "no comment" on reports that Iran was mediating between Pakistan's military government and the Bangla Desh rebels. Reporters were asked politely simply not to talk about it, as even an official denial might seem to give substance to the report. Sultan Khan shortly after made a trip to Moscow, and the announcement of Yahya's planned visit to Teheran, coming on the heels of Sultan Khan's return to Islamabad from Moscow, touched off speculation of another impending Tashkent. The comings and goings certainly did have the look of another Soviet-inspired accord coming up. But how far would Yahya risk infuriating Mr. Bhutto, who still has the mobs behind him? The Tashkent accord of January 1966 between Ayub Khan and Shastri was the start of the split between Mr. Bhutto and Ayub. Bhutto is also unlikely to have forgotten that General Yahya Khan was the officer involved in implementing the deal with his Indian counterpart, whom he met in New Delhi to arrange for the pullback of Indian and Pakistani troops from each other's territories.

Mr. Bhutto has already started to take on a defiant attitude to Yahya, though his latest outbursts may have been touched off by advance information of Yahya's plans to set back the date for the handing over of power to the civilians. However, Yahya's current dilemma about the transfer of power is that many of the Awami Leaguers whose names were cleared of any involvement in the secessionist bid are just not around to take their seats in the National Assembly. The desperate and repeated calls he and others have made for the refugees to return may be as much directed at the "qualified" Awami Leaguers as at the millions of others who have fled. Even the promises of "amnesty" seem to have done no good. There just is not enough trust in an all-powerful military government. Theoretically, therefore, as long as the "qualified" Awami Leaguers do not return, the National Assembly will not have the "quorum" Yahya desires and cannot be convened. As long as it is not convened, Yahya cannot present his constitution to it for approval before transferring power to the assembly, and a civilian Prime Minister. One can see good reason for Mr. Bhutto's impatience. He, after all, seems next in line for the premiership.

BALTIMORE SUN September 29, 1971
EDITORIAL : PAKISTAN INTERNAL

Six months after the West Pakistan government and army struck out at East Pakistan, the effects of that action still felt, and grown worse. Now the chaos of Pakistan has been brought to the attention of the United Nations ; not as an item on the agenda but in the general debate as the statements of position with which the sessions of the General Assembly ordinarily open.

They seldom open with so vehement an exchange of charges as those expressed on Monday between Swaran Singh, Indian Foreign Minister on the one side, and Agha Shahi and Mohammad Ali of Pakistan on the other. Swaran Singh's attack was bitter. He accused West Pakistan of having set off a reign of terror in East Bengal, which is East Pakistan, and of continuing its "deadly activities". He called the "civilian government" lately set up in East Bengal a group of figure-heads, and West Pakistan's repeated proclamations of amnesty a fraud, since Mujibur Rahman, leader of the outlawed Awami League, and others elected to National Assembly in the voting, West Pakistan refused to accept, are on trial for treason.

Agha Shahi's demand that Swaran Singh be ruled out of order, assigning it the internal affairs of another country, was denied. Mohammad Ali's more orderly reply in procedural terms was devoted to a charge that India has instigated and was abetting the East Bengalis in a "well planned military effort" to break up Pakistan.

In this West Pakistan once again reveals the weakness of its case. It is true that after the events of March some in India were for open belligerency against Pakistan, and it is obviously true that in the subsequent months India has made contingency military plans. But to call India a conspirator in a revolt against the government is simply absurd. India is involved because it is in India that the refugees from the terror, now numbering some 8 million, have sought safety.

This is why to India, and to many outside India, the situation is hardly an internal Pakistani affair and why the West Pakistan government, unless it altogether changes its course cannot make it seem so.

THE INDIAN NATION (Patna) September 29, 1971

THREE ENEMIES TO BE FOUGHT

By Durga Das

Mrs. Indira Gandhi's current visit to Moscow is pregnant with possibilities about the power balance in our sub-continent and in Asia. The crisis caused by the influx of 9 million refugees from East Bengal and the continued deterioration in the economic situation in the country have provided an impetus for a comprehensive review of the situation. In other words, our Prime Minister has gone to find out where Moscow stands in regard to problem that confront her. A down-to-earth approach is expected in the dialogue in Moscow

Three enemies have to be fought by Mrs. Gandhi and she has to be sure what Russia will do in terms of the Indo-Soviet Treaty signed on August 9. Enemy No. 1 is West Pakistan's military junta. She cannot allow the death of Bangla Desh and she is committed to sending all the refugees back home. The international conference on Bangla Desh held last week-end in New Delhi, was attended by about seventy delegates from foreign countries and an equal number of Indian delegates. All continents were represented, although no Russian or Chinese delegates appeared on the scene. The Ruling Congress and C.P.I. shied off the conference, but their supporters succeeded in omitting the clause in the resolution demanding universal recognition of the new State, urging India to give a lead in recognising the Bangla Desh Government. It was admitted on all hands that the general elections in East Pakistan have given legitimacy to the Bangla Desh Government, and destroyed the claim of the military junta to rule the land. According to Jefferson a Government deserving of recognition must be in accord "with the democratic will of the nation substantially declared". Perhaps the best assessment of the situation in Bangla Desh has been given by Jean Daridan, former French Ambassador to India in an article in Le Monde of September 18. He writes: "India is an immense country, full of economic problems and social contrasts, which it tackles in pragmatic fashion and with far more success than it generally receives credit for as it does

not have any talent at all for public relations. In spite of criticism from political quarters, and the pressure of potentially intolerable public opinion, New Delhi has been playing it cool since the beginning of the crisis... I believe that Bangla is no longer in the realm of theoretical considerations and that the powers must act quickly to get India and Pakistan out of the collision course on which they are headed. At stake is the orderly development of India and the survival of Pakistan. It is in the interest of the world at large that this problem be settled". Mrs. Gandhi can recognise Bangla Desh regime as the provisional government of Bangla Desh on Indian soil. It can render military and economic aid to such a government. It is important, however, that some other countries too act likewise so that Pakistan's military junta will have no legitimate excuse to unleash a war against India. Political observers in New Delhi expect startling developments next week. The international community has been impressed most by defections of ambassadors and lower rank officials from various embassies and missions of Pakistan. This has convinced them of the genuineness of the revolt of the Bangla population. But for selfish reasons the great powers want to see Pakistan remain one entity and the Islamic nations have developed religious phobia.

The fact remains, however, that India has failed to sell the real story of the Bangla Desh tragedy to the world. An Australian M.P told the International Conference on Bangla Desh that the moment this issue was raised at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meeting at Kuala Lumpur, the High Commission of Pakistan poured tons of literature on their heads, while nothing came from the Indian Commission. A Union Minister who has just returned from his travels has stated that many countries have accepted the Pakistani version that refugees number only 2 million and that India is at the root of the trouble ! Whether because of our moral pose or self-righteous attitude, India has few friends in the wide world. Our ambassadors too feel inhibited in espousing a cause for they do not wish to run the risk of being ticked off. Pakistan's officials have a clear mandate to run down India on all occasions and by every means. Nixon and his kind are with Pakistan because they believe that the Pak. army is at their disposal, as was the mercenary Indian army under the British Raj. India will gain respect in the outside world only if it is clear about its

political philosophy and as to who can be its friends and who not. As matters stand we only irritate chancelleries of foreign lands. The second enemy Mrs. Gandhi is facing is the spectre of growing unemployment and rising prices. While she is successful in consolidating her hold on the party machine, she finds herself at sea in handling the developing crisis on the socio-economic front. Her father was let down by his aides who made him launch enterprises which have become millstones round India's neck. Her brains trust is now flirting with the idea of introducing war time controls in respect of essential goods and even of demonitising currency. The latter step, even if favoured, will not be taken until after the general election.

The question whether controls will bring in dividends at the elections is being hotly debated. The academicians say that 95 per cent of the people would get foodstuff, cloth and sugar at fixed prices and that would bring in votes. Those who have had experience of controls in the forties declare that there would be an adverse effect. A former Minister has stated that he was shown a mill in the South, which reduced pebbles to the shape of rice to help profiteers to mix it with rice. The whole issue will be thrashed out at the Conference of Chief Ministers early in October. The Chief Ministers of the State where elections are due, will find it difficult to cut down their expenses or take any measures which might cost them votes.

The third enemy of Mrs. Gandhi has just begun to raise its head. For the present, it is symbolised by the demand for maximum autonomy voiced by the D.M.K. leadership in Tamil Nadu and Akali spokesmen in Punjab. But there are rumblings in other states too. The purge of regional leadership from the Ruling Congress has been accepted without protest. It is difficult for the victims to counter the plea for induction of younger and committed leadership. Moreover, the people as a rule lend ready ears to charges of corruption. The general impression is that C.B.I.** only shadows those on the black list. These are politicians and officials who, if need be, can be hauled up for corruption. Politicians and public men who contact Western diplomats are also shadowed. Formerly those who contacted communist embassies were

* Dabir Monatra Kajagan

** Criminal Bureau of Investigation

shadowed, now a person can be thick with communist missions and not attract notice of intelligence men. Whether these assumptions have any basis or not, they are generally believed in political circles. The fact that the Administrative Staff College of Hyderabad staged last week-end a seminar opened by Vice-President Pathak, on Centre-State relations, shows the way the wind is blowing. If the regime at the Centre becomes too dictatorial regionalism will raise its head and pose a serious challenge. Already the decision of the Ruling Congress in Tamil Nadu not to make terms with Mr. Kamaraj in any circumstances has been welcomed by the D.M.K. and has given credence to Mr. Karunanidhi's claim that Mr. Kamaraj is politically nearer to D.M.K. than to Congress (R).

Mrs. Gandhi is becoming conscious of the danger of regionalism to the internal stability of the country. India's support of the cause of Bangla Desh could in certain circumstances encourage fissiparous tendencies in India. The next three months will thus prove very crucial in the evolution of domestic politics. Whether India is heading for a spell of a dark age or of peace and progress will depend on the course Mrs. Gandhi charts for herself on her return from Moscow the day after tomorrow.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES (New Delhi) September 30, 1971

HOW SUCCESSFUL ARE THE GUERRILLAS ?

By Maj.-Gen. D.K. PALIT (Retd).

Although today newspaper reports on the Mukti Bahini's operations and its successes against the Pakistan army are not as wildly exaggerated as they used to be during the early days of the Bangla Desh war, they are still unrealistically sanguine and reflect a degree of unfamiliarity of the nature of the military operations that are being conducted in that country. For instance, there are frequent reports about "liberated" areas under the occupation of the Bahini. A delegate to the recent International Conference on Bangla Desh claimed that the guerrillas are taking a toll of 5,000 Pakistan army casualties every month and that the Pakistan Government is forced to spend up to 150 crores per month on

the counter-insurgency operations, these overtly optimistic reports help nobody, least of all the Mukti Bahini. Ultimately, such reports will lead to impression that the defeat of the Pakistan army is just around the corner and that the Bahini is well able to achieve its aims by itself. One of the reasons for this unrealistic reportage is that though we now know something of the strength, organisation and tactics of the Mukti Bahini, not much is known about the method of operation of the Pakistan army. The result is that in the absence of any definite information from the "other side of the hill", the success stories of the guerrillas leave one with impression of a Pakistan army with its back to the wall, fighting a losing battle in an atmosphere of terror and defeatism. This is not the case.

On March 12, the day when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared that he was taking over the administration of Bangla Desh, these elements of the Pakistan army were located in East Bengal: the 14th Infantry Division made up of four infantry brigades containing a total of 14 infantry battalions, a regiment of light (Chaffee) tanks and three artillery regiments; in other words, an infantry division with an increased allotment of infantry but somewhat under-strength in the normal artillery complement of a Pakistan Division. However, of the 14 battalions, five belonged to the East Bengal Regiment, composed entirely of Bengalis; these ceased to be an asset almost immediately, though it would be incorrect to assume that they went over to be Liberation Army as battalions. After the systematic murder of senior officers, disarming of certain elements and large-scale arrests, only a part of this Bengali Regiment was able to "take the field", in small, company size groups.

Besides the 14th Division, there were 3,000 Razakars (all Bengalis) and 3,000 East Punjab Rangers (mixed Bengalis and Pakistanis)—the equivalent of our Border Security Force. Most of the Bengali elements of these irregular forces were able to slip away and, where they could be organised, they joined up with the Liberation Army of Bangla Desh. Yahya Khan, while ostensibly holding political discussions with the Sheikh, had already ordered reinforcements to be flown into East Bengal. By the end of April he had built up his strength in Bangla Desh to 39 infantry battalions and six artillery regiments—the equivalent of four divisions but under strength in armour and artillery. It was this force

that the Mukti Fouj vainly tried to take on in open combat—and suffered so greatly in the process.

In the first phase of its operation, the Pakistan high command aimed to consolidate its position in the cantonments where they had been located—Dacca, Chittagong, Jessore, and Rangpur in the north—and to ensure that critical border towns through which the liberation forces could establish contact with West Bengal were kept under control. Certain towns did fall to the liberation forces; for instance, Comilla and Mymensingh. But eventually these two were re-captured. Sylhet and Mymensingh posed a certain amount of difficulty, because the crucial bridge at Brahmanbaria had been blown, and it took more than a month for the Pakistanis to establish themselves there. Besides the regular army, about 3,000 Pakistani Rangers have been included into Bangla Desh. But the inference that these are specially trained troops for counter-insurgency operations is wrong. The Rangers are intended for border security duties and, even here, they have not proved entirely reliable with the result that they have to be stiffened with a sprinkling of regular army personnel in border outposts: all "counter-insurgency" operations are carried out by the regular Pakistan Army operating along regular lines. The tactics of the Pakistan Army today is to maintain firm control in all major towns and cantonments all over Bangla Desh and to establish check-posts along all the critical border areas. From these firm bases, detachments of troops are sent fanning out to border areas or other Mukti Bahini stronghold whenever intelligence is received about their movements. This is not counter-insurgency tactics: this is basically a defensive posture. However, if the Pakistan Government's aim is to maintain a military presence throughout the country, then it is achieving its aim. This is a strong military position because the guerrilla tactics of the Mukti Bahini can strike only at its periphery. To dislodge any part of it—and only then can there be a claim to a "liberated area"—will entail set-piece battles in open combat. This the Bahini forces are unable to carry out, as they learned at great cost in April-May.

Nor is it realistic to assume that the Pakistan military operations are unduly logistically hampered or economically ruinous. It is true the rail and road communications have been effectively disrupted, particularly in the Dacca-Comilla-Chittagong sector. But they are not entirely inoperable. In

any case, Pakistan has been able to utilise a fleet of helicopters and patrol boats which were received from the United States during the relief operations following the East Bengal hurricane, to augment their air maintenance capacity. Since the army is conducting an essentially low-intensively campaign, the maintenance requirements of the forces are only marginally above normal. There has certainly been a tightening of belts, but no indication that logistical maintenance is breaking down. It is not the purpose here to belittle the heroic efforts of the Mukti Bahini but to introduce a degree of realism into the unduly optimistic picture that is so often painted about the purely military operations that are being conducted. The Mukti Bahini is a resistance regular armed force; it is not feasible to expect it to achieve a military victory. On the other hand, whenever the guerrillas and saboteurs are active—in the border belts, in various pockets in the Dacca or Mymensingh regions, and in the southern delta regions—their sabotage operations against shipping at Chalna, Chittagong and Narayanganj have been remarkably successful—they have forced the enemy on to the defensive. They have prevented the occupation government from exercising effective administrative control over most parts of the country. And they have succeeded in demoralising Pakistan armed forces personnel to an extent where the government now has to offer inducements in the form of extra pay and promotion to personnel to keep alive their spirit against the onslaught of Mukti Bahini—but we must not be led to believe that they are likely to lead to a military victory.

THE DAILY AL MADINA (Jeddah) September 30, 1971
EDITORIAL: WHERE IS WAR?
By Adnan Kamel Salah

The Indo-Russian statement issued in Moscow yesterday is yet another step of interference of Russians and Indians in the internal affairs of East Pakistan, as this statement reflexes the two parties' pretention to be worried about the situation in East Pakistan. It is certain that a large number of refugees crossed into India, but they are not 9 million as the Indian

propaganda puts it. The refugees went to India in order to escape the saboteurs coming from the Indian territories.

The British correspondent of the "Times" reported from the Indo-East Pakistan borders that the Indians confess that the saboteurs, who enter East Pakistan actually move from positions in the Indian territories, which fact leads to the question whether these saboteurs are really East Pakistani nationals ? And, in spite of the sabotage activities from India, the Pakistan Government could control all parts of East Pakistan and ensure security there, and the saboteurs could only move in some borders of Pakistan with India, and that too often under protection of the Indian army. So, while talking about the dangers of war what pushes Russia to pretend that it will ensure that no war arises in the area ?

It is obvious that Pakistan should protect its territories and also stop sabotage within its territories, and in this, it is not aggressing or causing war. But India has taken dangerous step by signing a protection and friendship treaty with Russia and furthermore, it launched a propaganda attack against Pakistan, as if it were preparing the atmosphere for what it intends to do. The outstanding problem is that Indians support sabotage actions in Pakistan and prevent refugees from returning to their homes in Pakistan by giving them false accounts about the situation in East Pakistan. But these refugees (90% Indians) as India itself stated, have left East Pakistan for India on account of several political and religious factors. India, however, could not provide them food and lodging, therefore, it is not believed that they live quiet and tranquillised in India.

If India intends to act for a real peace then the way to achieve this is not to support the acts of sabotage, stop anti-Pakistan propaganda and to encourage the refugees to return to their homes. That will be difficult, particularly because India is supported by far and contradictory elements in various parts of the world, which included Kossygin in Moscow, Christian Organisations in Britain and Canada, Robert Kennedy in America and the Juish Seniors in Israel. The real intention for peace will be revealed if all these contradictions are resisted.

THE EVENING STAR (Washington) September 30, 1971
PAKISTANI CHAOS EDGES INDIA NEARER TO WAR
By Crosby S. Noyes

With each day that passes, the chances of reaching a political settlement between East and West Pakistan decrease and the danger of war between Pakistan and India grows. Despite the claims of the government in Islamabad, the military situation in East Pakistan is anything but under control. The repressive efforts of the army which began on March 25 to crush the Bengali movement toward autonomy go on. Today, according to reports, whole villages are being systematically destroyed. And each time they are, other whole villages are abandoned, their inhabitants joining the flood of refugees fleeing toward India. Again, despite the claims of West Pakistani officials, government administration in the eastern province has virtually ceased to exist. In theory, an appointed civilian government has been installed for several weeks under the leadership of Dr. A.M. Malik. In fact, the army is the only authority that exists, with martial law in force throughout the whole country.

Meanwhile, the guerrilla resistance movement is growing in size and effectiveness. With India supplying sanctuary and support, the "Mukti Bahini" or Liberation Forces, of the Free Bengal movement are stepping up their harassment of government forces and inflicting growing casualties. Reprisals inflicted on unarmed civilians only make matters worse, creating now freedom fighters along with refugees.

In India the situation is rapidly becoming intolerable. It is now estimated that more than 8 million East Pakistanis, most of them Hindus, are jammed into refugee camps along the border, adding enormously to the problems of India's normally unstable and restive eastern frontier region. The sheer number of these refugees, increasing at a rate of about 50,000 a week, imposes a hopeless burden in India. And with the possibility of wide-spread famine in East Pakistan, the refugees flood, if anything, is expected to increase in the months to come.

Inevitably, the pressure on the Indian government to take some decisive action is building up. Until now, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has moved with restraint, carefully avoiding any move, such as the recognition of Bangla Desh (Bengal Nation) that might provoke a third round of fighting between India and Pakistan. The Indians are confident enough of their military capability if war with Pakistan should erupt: they believe they would win it and they also believe that the major powers with interests in the area—Russia, China and the United States—would have the good sense not to get involved. But when it comes to what might result from such a war—in either East or West Pakistan they are a good deal less confident. The Indians are taking no comfort in the clear signs of a deteriorating political situation in West Pakistan. The government in Islamabad, having failed to put down the Bengali rebellion with a quick, overwhelming show of military force, now seems very uncertain how to deal with the situation from here. Criticism of the military government of Mohammed Yahya Khan is increasing. And the leading civilian political figure in West Pakistan, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, is talking openly about the possibility of a revolution or a coup d'etat against the military junta that runs the country. In this complicated and very dangerous situation, there is one man who conceivably could bring about a settlement which would be less than disastrous for the major parties concerned. He is Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, head of the now outlawed Awami League of East Pakistan, whose party won a clear majority in the country's national elections last December.

Since the army crackdown on March 25, Sheikh Mujibur has been under arrest in West Pakistan. Charged with treason, he has been tried in secret by a military court. The verdict, which carries the threat of a death sentence, has not been announced.

Sheikh Mujibur is believed to be the only Bengali leader, with his prestige and personal following, who might be able to reverse the ruinous trend toward chaos in East Pakistan. Even he would have great difficulty in selling any political solution to his followers that aimed at anything less than full independence. But without him, no solution is even conceivable.

It is doubtful, to be sure, that the government of West Pakistan is rational enough at this point to acquit the Sheikh of the charges against him and enter into serious negotiations. The esential thing is that the possibility should not be foreclosed by the conviction and possible execution of the Bengali leader. The United States, which has continued to supply aid to Pakistan in the hope of exerting some restraining influence on the government in Islamabad, should use whatever leverage it has to prevent that ultimate tragedy.

[A SONG SUNG BY GEORGE HARRISON IN MADISON SQUARE, NEW YORK, U.S.A. FOR COLLECTING FUNDS FOR BANGLADESH REFUGEES]

My friend came to me
Sadness in his eyes
Told me that he wanted help
For his country died
Although I couldn't feel a thing
I knew I had to try
Now I'm asking all of you
Help us save some lives
Bangladesh...Bangladesh
There are so many people
A-dying fast
It sure looks like a mess
I've never seen such distress
So won't you lend a hand
Try to understand
Really the people (of) Bangladesh
Bangladesh...Bangladesh
Such a great disaster
I don't understand
It sure looks like a mess
I've never known such distress....



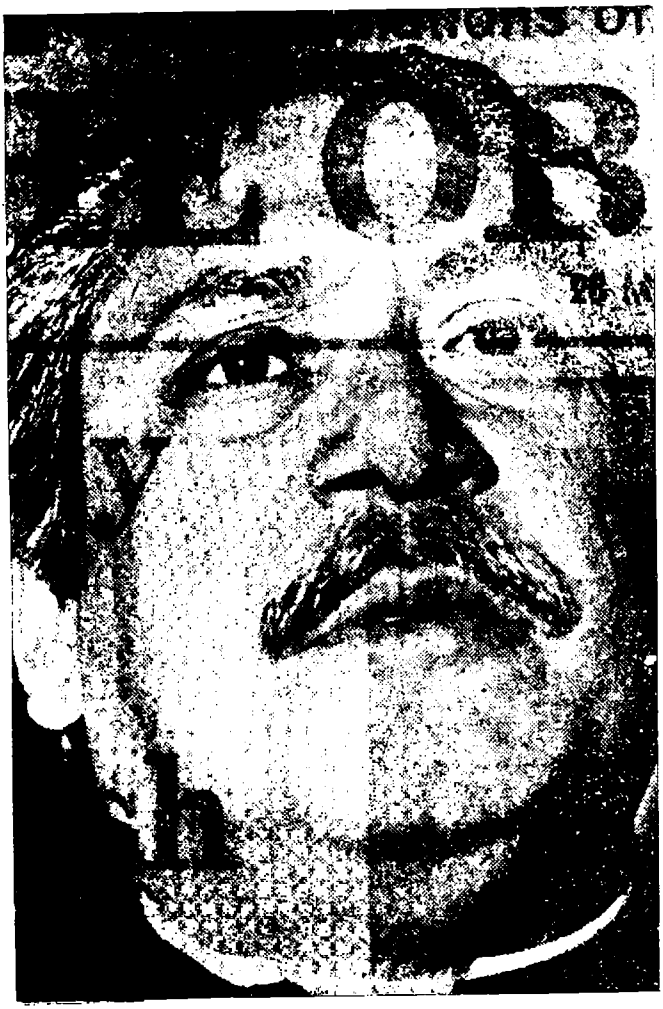
Bengali refugee with her daughter on lap.
Time : 2-8-71.



Mukti Bahini Guerrillas hunting snipers.
Photo : Kishor Parekh.



There were more innocent casualties like this.
Photo : Kishor Parekh.



Bengal's hero.
The Observer : 28-3-71.

TRUE COPY OF AN OFFICE ORDER BY PAKISTAN HIGH COMMISSION IN LONDON

PAKISTAN HIGH COMMISSION
LONDON
OFFICE ORDER

No. MOC/7/71 **Dated 11th August, 1971**

The following further payments may be made to Mr. Hamidul Huq Chowdhury and Mr. Mahmood Ali.

a) £ 75/-each as contingencies for entertainment chargeable to the Government.
b) £90/-each to be refunded in Pakistan currency on their return.
c) D.A. for transit and stay at London as admissible to Category 1 officials.

2. Sanction in respect of admissibility of T. A. & D. A. to Category 1 officials in SSP/69/71 dated 19th June, 1971.
3. Sanction for payment of refundable and non-refundable Foreign Exchange has not been received but instructions are contained in Telegram No. 5981 dated 10th August, 1971 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
4. Expenditure is debitable to 35-PA/B-1 Delegation to UN and other International conferences etc.

Sd/-
(Bakhtiar Ali)
HEAD OF CHANCERY

THE DAILY SEARCHLIGHT (Patna) October 1, 1971
RUSSIA MAY MOVE FOR MUJIB'S RELEASE

UNI Report From New Delhi

The Soviet Government is likely to take up shortly with Pakistan's military regime the release of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who has been languishing in a West Pakistan jail for the last six months. The Soviet decision to approach the Pakistan Government is understood to have been indicated to Indian officials during Prime Minister Indira

Gandhi's three-day visit to Moscow which concluded yesterday. The Kremlin is also expected to ask Pakistan to start negotiations with Sheikh Mujib in his capacity as leader of the Party which won a majority in the general election last December for a peaceful settlement of the Bangla Desh crisis.

THE HAMPSTEAD AND HIGHGATE EXPRESS (London)
October 1, 1971
EDITORIAL: VOLUNTEERS WHO RISK ALL TO SAVE LIVES IN BANGLA DESH

The death toll in Bangla Desh is steadily climbing. Some say it may reach many millions. Crops are lying rotting in the fields with no one to gather them. Disease and malnutrition are crushing a people who once stood up and demanded their freedom. No government will risk political and diplomatic repercussions to save a country from dying on its knees, but a handful of young people are risking arrest, imprisonment and perhaps even their lives to help. Operation Omega, a volunteer organisation working from shabby offices in Kings Cross, is the only group in the world bringing relief direct to the people inside Bangla Desh.

One of the members, Ben Crow, a 23 year old former Camden traffic engineer, arrived back in London last week after spending 11 days in a West Pakistan jail. He and three others. Miss Joyce Keniwell, Miss Chris Pratt and Mr. Dan Due, the only American volunteer, were arrested while trying to distribute supplies in Bangla Desh. Ben said he was told in prison that two million people had been killed. There were women and children in prison whose husbands and fathers had been shot for supporting Bangla Desh. Other prisoners included magistrates, police chiefs and other officials who had been there since March. He said he could see no sign of Pakistan President Yahya Khan's promised amnesty.

On the journey to the prison in Jessore, Ben said he passed many villages, all empty, with houses locked and barred or demolished and burnt. He saw very few people on

the road. The paddy fields had not been harvested and the rice was rotting where it stood. In Jessore a lot of rebuilding was in progress, but he saw signs of past fighting. On the plane back to London after his release, he met a representative of the Aid Consortium of British Charities who, said Ben, had predicted a famine as bad as that in Bengal in 1943 when many millions died of starvation. The representative also stated that 153 United Nations staff had been in Dacca for three months without distributing any significant amounts of food—although there were large stocks in Chittagong from the cyclone disaster. He added that the UN plan was to distribute relief supplies through the local civil authorities, which meant control by the Pakistan army. It could be a "devastating political weapon" in their hands.

Miss Pratt said she saw thousands of refugees massed on the border with India, waiting to cross the swollen rivers. Many had been on the road for 15 days without food. They had no money and some of the boatmen were charging to take them across. They usually had to wait three days to get over. Once in India, she said, those with money could travel by lorry or rickshaw. But most didn't and had to carry on walking. Refugees who did not get into camps, or were afraid of them, built straw huts at the side of the road. They drank from the ditches—the same ditches they were urinating in. "The children were suffering from acute malnutrition. They had large swollen bellies and tiny arms and legs. Some of the people I thought were 70 years of age. I found they were only in their 40s or 50s. All the reports of the suffering out there are true. I have seen them myself", she said. While in jail, she said, she met women and children suffering from malnutrition and whose prison diet of carbohydrates was doing nothing to help. She later discovered that they had been jailed for attempting to cross into India.

The Omega volunteers were treated quite well in jail. They were given beds and blankets for nearly all their stay. They were given banana curry with a boiled egg added because they were British. Ben said the prison guards, mostly local men, were friendly. "If it had been run by the military it may have been very different". The four were charged with illegal entry and possessing documents prejudicial to the peace of the country—namely their Omega contracts, which contained a condemnation of Pakistan's activities. The charge was later cut to just "possession". Ben said he

thought the illegal entry charge was dropped because the authorities wanted the trial to look like civil proceedings. Illegal entry charges are tried under martial law.

The volunteers went on hunger strike for five days, until they were told of the date of the trial. They were advised by the Second Secretary of the British Deputy High Commission to plead guilty, apologise and promise not to repeat the act. They refused to do so, maintaining that they had done nothing morally wrong and that they did not recognise the regime. At the trial, in Jessore, the court was packed with officials and onlookers. The prosecution's evidence was lies, said Ben. One man testified to arresting them. They had never seen him before.

Earlier, they had been warned that if they stood-up in court and attacked Pakistan, they could get three years for contempt. "This scared me quite a lot" said Ben. After the first day of the trial, "we were taken to see the Second Secretary. He said he had some interesting news. The maximum sentence for the charge was five years and not six months as we had earlier thought. We went back into the court and the prosecution completed its case. We were asked how we pleaded and Chris got up and said we would like to make a statement about why we would not plead, and why we had come. But we would not contest the charges as we did not recognise the court. We could not accept the court or any martial authority. We said we could not deny we had the documents. The magistrate took this as a plea of guilty. He said he would be lenient with us and sentenced us to detention until the court rose, which was about two hours. We also had to leave the country and not pass through India. As we left the court several people whispered 'Jai Bangla' (Long live Bangla Desh). Had they been heard saying it, they would have been shot. While the four were held, another Omega team made two successful crossing into Bangla Desh, and distributed lentils, high protein biscuits and rice substitute—enough to feed 1,000 for three days, They also gave clothes to 700.

One team member was Mr. Gordon Slaven, 20, a former accounts clerk, of Belisize Park Gardens, Hampstead, who sent a report of the second journey to Omega's headquarters. Although the monsoon was drawing to a close, he said, the area was still severely flooded. The team crossed the border

in three small punts. Using one village as a base, they spent two days going to outlying villages and distributed supplies through the village leaders, who chose those in greatest need. All the villages, four in all, could only be reached by boat. During their stay they met no Pakistani troops, but saw some men of the Mukti Fouj, the Bangla Desh army, carrying 303 rifles. There are plans to go across the border again this time with a Bengali doctor. The main aim will be to assess the medical needs of the people, especially the children.

Miss Pratt said that 30 to 40 people would be needed for attempted crossing at army controlled points on the border. She added she would be prepared to return in such a group, even though it would mean a fairly long term of imprisonment if she were caught. Ben is also prepared to return. Another Omega team recently went to Europe to enlist help. They received an enthusiastic response from Holland and West Berlin. The Germans said they would send a team of their own as soon as possible. Omega started in June with a few London members. Now they have premises in Manchester as well and a mailing list of over a thousand people, who help with petitions, finance and by extending the Omega network. The organisation desperately need cash for more supplies for Bangla Desh. Most of the donations it receives are under £20. But one cheque for 5,000 dollars has arrived from a man in prison in the United States for refusing to fight in Vietnam. Money and administrative help has come from Bengalis in Britain, who, said an Omega spokesman, were extremely generous.

THE YORKSHIRE POST (Leeds) October 2, 1971
EDITORIAL: GRIM OUTLOOK

President Nixon yesterday emphasised the gravity of the East Pakistan refugee problem when he said: "Unchecked, this situation could drift toward disaster in the form of famine or even war". That has been apparent for some time. But even the £104m of relief aid for which the President asked the United States Congress would only provide a partial answer. International relief agencies and experts are often

wildly pessimistic in their forecasts of famines, and are not always politically neutral. It will be remembered how from time to time during the Nigerian civil war about twice the number of Ibos who actually existed were said to have died or to have been in imminent danger of death.

Many people now, benefitting from hindsight, realise that wildly exaggerated and partisan reports and comments in the west created false fears and hopes among the secessionists leading them to continue a hopeless battle at the cost of many lives that might otherwise have been spared. The economy of the country suffered more than it would have done if the war had ended sooner—making the process of rehabilitation more difficult. One should not therefore, blame one side only for the grim tragedy which has enveloped East Pakistan. Foreign humanitarians who refer to East Pakistan as Bangla Desh can hardly be surprised if the central government authorities throw them out. However, those for whom history is not enough perhaps were interested in the words of India's Minister of Refugees and Rehabilitation. He said that, among other reasons, India had asked volunteers to withdraw from refugee camps because the authorities suspected that foreign governments had introduced agents into charitable organisations to provoke trouble between the Hindu and Moslem religious communities. Of course, it is quite likely that the real reason for the expulsions was that India did not want foreigners to witness the extent of her own cynical involvement in the civil war. But if India has any legitimate grounds for such suspicions, how much more so has the Pakistan Government?

It seems to us, therefore, that a relief operation on the scale that is necessary to reduce the extent of the famine tragedy which was forecast—possibly correctly—at the Toronto conference of South East Asia experts, can only be carried out through the United Nations Organisation in full and equal administrative cooperation with the Pakistan authorities.

It can hardly be denied that the kind of support and encouragement that extreme elements in East Pakistan have been getting from outside, made it impossible for moderate elements in the Yahya Khan administration in creating conditions of "normality" leading to a new deal for East Pakistan. The replacement of Gen. Tikka Khan by Dr. Abdul Motaleb Malik as Governor of East Pakistan was a conciliatory gesture.

But some foreigners are not anxious to see conciliatory gesture. They would prefer to fight to the last East Pakistani, as they would have been prepared to fight to the last Ibo.

THE WEEKLY ORGANISER (Delhi) October 2, 1971
PAKISTAN HAS TO BE GET RID OF AT ANY SACRIFICE
By Chitra Gupta

With the opening of another session of the UN General Assembly, such interest in the tragedy of Bangla Desh, as had been roused in other countries bids fair to be side-tracked or scotched by the endless harangues of national delegates, all vying with one another in looking for the wood among the trees, only to be entangled in the undergrowth and overgrowth. The preliminary conclusions of the non-aligned group have salved its conscience by transforming the 'international issue' of Bangla Desh into a 'humanitarian' one of refugees needing relief and rehabilitation. But the attempt to read into it a triumph for our diplomacy is a pitiful exercise in self-deception. The threat of war has again come to be canvassed in the papers to remind us more of the unwavering determination of Pak rulers to finish their job in their own than to unfold any kind of counter-strategy on our side to foil them. This seems a moment for a recapitulation and reappraisal of our national or official attitude to the entire question. An attempt to define the fundamentals of the problem has been burked all round ; therefore, it is hardly to be wondered at if no attempt has been made to wade out of the contradictions and illogicalities which have immobilised both such public opinion as gets aired as also our Government itself.

To understand the upsurge of mass sentiment in favour of the freedom-fighters in Bangla Desh, we have to hark back to the genesis of Pakistan itself. When that fatal decision was arrived at, there was such violent revulsion of feeling in the country that was unluckily side-tracked by the assassination of the Mahatma. Quite apart from the cerebrations of the assassin—his statement at his trial is still a suppressed document—it has proved in a long-range view a disastrous

blow to the cause of Indian nationalism itself by offering to the world at large a permanent and ineffaceable scapegoat which can be immolated for all time to come. The nearest parallel to it is the crucifixion of Christ which has been the albatross round the necks of international Jewry all these nineteen centuries. Not that anti-Semitism is ardently pro-Christian—in fact very much the reverse! But it has served to tar the Jews all over the world as ersatz pariahs of the international community. But they chose the hard way and, braving the covert and open malevolence of the world, have managed to wreak their age-long vengeance on their tormentors by infiltrating among them and wresting from them a leadership which has placed them among the elite of the world.

In our case, however, it has been otherwise; for, the attempt of the better mind of India to work through patterns and prescriptions of a just society in a modern setting never got a start, but suffered abortions which have debased and discredited us. But one ardent sentiment or conviction is common to all the Hindus and a small percentage of the members of the other communities—that is, the grim realisation that Pakistan has to be get rid of at any sacrifice and the people rid of this curse if they were ever to be allowed to live at peace as the nationals of a single country.

To this end, a variety of solutions is possible, and they may be studied with advantage if our soi-disant statesmen would only care to cast a look backward at the history of India through ages. Even in its darkest days, it was tormented or cherished as one country and never as a congeries of warring units. A restraint born of commonsense on the one hand and a spirit of tolerance which is the quintessence of a civilised way of life on the other, kept the country on an even keel.

In proof of this, we have the extra-ordinary constitutional arrangement by which, while India is still free for every Pakistani citizen and many of them enjoy the further privileges of dual perquisites, Pakistan is a forbidden country to the Indians. It is not the doctrine of secularism, fished out from the dustbin of Western history, that accounts for this tolerance. Rather it is because it is innate to the Hindu and is as vital to him as the breath of his nostrils. What was the hope that underlay the reluctant acceptance of Pakistan by our then leaders? It was explicitly and emphatically stated

by Nehru himself more than one that, with the grant of Pakistan, the communal demon would be exorcised once for all. It was that hope that germinated and shot up in the Bangla Desh movement which has been inspired and led by a leading Muslim. Because of that, we here saw at last a ray of hope and instinctively announced our solidarity and support to the Bangla Desh fighters.

Shrimati Gandhi, who so intemperately and chronically fulminates against the Jana Sangh, has not yet explained why such a communal body should go all out and with such reckless zeal to espouse a mass movement of Muslims by Muslims for Muslims! All the world knows, and not least the Jana Sangh leaders, that Hindus are a tiny minority even in East Bengal where alone they were most numerous in Pakistan. The reason is simple: with the communal complex got out of the way, deeper sideration became unveiled to Hindus and Muslims alike, and they felt that they should sacrifice their all to ensure their triumph. The cry of 'Pakistan in danger' is both true and false; and to the extent it is true, it is in the nature of things and not due to the machinations of Hindus either in the Government or in the parties or in the nation. To the extent it is man-made, the contributors to it were the Muslims themselves, the yawning distance between the two wings and the ruling versus the inferior race which Pakistan policies and economics have been condemned to practice.

United Pakistan is a figment of the imagination precisely like United India; but if either is or can be made viable, the inspiration and sustenance for it must be in the minds and hearts of the people concerned. The dismemberment or disappearance of Pakistan can never mean the wiping out of Islam, for there are a dozen other countries which profess to be the guardians and guides of that mystique. The only difference between our Government and our people on this issue is that the PM talks about the rape of democracy and genocide while the mass sentiment looks to the identity of the socio-cultural bonds that knit not merely Bengali and Bengali, but Muslim with Hindu all over the country. These, as I have pointed out time and again, are anterior to the rise of Islam and go back to submerged memories which both Hindu and Muslim still share, all claims to the contrary notwithstanding.

A democracy may be caricatured and made the laughing stock of wise men everywhere, while a dictatorship might

prove humane in spite of the supercilious disapproval of high-brows. The only and supreme test is what kind of enduring rapport exists between the rulers and the ruled, whether it can stand the stresses and strains of passing discontents to safeguard the perpetuation of the body-politic through all vicissitudes of time and circumstance. Judged by such a test, it is elementary to say that Pakistan has no future to match even its traumatic short course.

Accident having enabled us to behold this return of the whirligig of time, we should have started our all on it, and confidently abided the outcome of it. We have failed more disastrously than now seems apparent, for we have truckled to Pakistan a second time out of timidity in contrast to wish-ful thinking on the first occasion. One consequence of this failure bids fair to assume a threatening posture with intent to dismantle our country in more insidious ways. Even among the corrupt office-seekers who are besieging the PM for her favours, there is emerging a new section which has for its aim toppling her and at the same time, disrupting the Indian Union itself. This is the inwardness of the demand for 'complete autonomy' voiced in certain states and this sounds suspiciously like the initial demand of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

It is not an accident that this new move has been spear-headed by the DMK in Tamil Nadu, which couples it with fervid assurances of having forsworn, for all time, its original demand for secession from the Union. That party has so far successfully resisted being swallowed up by the Prime Minister in the progress of her octopus control of the whole of India. The flabbiness of the opposition to her in the Hindi area is in striking contrast to the mounting militancy of the DMK more noticeable since the PM stooped to equality with it for winning elections with a view to conquer it eventually.

The reported move of Kamaraj to second the DMK's demand for autonomy and opposition to Hindi might seem as opportunistic as the PM's moves ever since she began with a terminological inexactitude in her grasp of untrammelled power and the annihilation of her intransigent colleagues. But Kamaraj was a DMK man while being an orthodox Congress-man as well, and he never had overflowing love for Hindi. So he had a good enough conscience in stressing his affiliations in the present context. A combination of DMK and Kamaraj

would annihilate the PM's rump led by Shri C. Subrahmaniam whose own record of changing his loyalties is none too respectable. He was Rajaji's right hand man, but deserted him to troop behind Kamaraj when he rose to power. He had to leave the Centre in dubious circumstances and found a new asylum under the PM who has rewarded him duly in the belief that he would bring her the DMK's head on a golden plate.

This dream has been rudely shattered by this new alignment of Kamaraj and the DMK. Virendra Patil from Mysore and Brahmananda Reddy or his lieutenants from Andhra may all swell the DMK party for 'ideological' reasons against which the Prime Minister has no spear to hurl or shield for self-protection. It was ludicrous of C.S. to twit Kamaraj of being opportunist, seeing that he holds a record similar which is vitiated by a lust for office and power as well. To be sure, the demand for autonomy has a siren-voice appeal all over the world, and it is well calculated to rouse the rabble precisely as the 'banish poverty' has to all those who are under-privileged. But if one can simulate both roles as the DMK is attempting to do, the PM would find her work cut out for her in the South. The fact that the erstwhile monolithic might of the Communist Party in Kerala has been splintered, shows that the appeal of communism, QUA communism is virtually non-existent in the South as a whole. Even in the North, it is the active collaboration of the PM with the so-called leftists that has put many men of straw in power at the Centre. In Kerala however, the CPI has become an alms-man at the hands of the Congress—I. Thus the opposition groupings and formations in the other states of the region have the potentiality to build up the only meaningful and effective opposition to the PM in the whole country.

If the price of Telengana remaining content with the status quo was the rolling of the head of Brahmananda Reddy what are the odds against the PM having to bow out to keep the North and South together ? The stakes are high and the aim, both positively and negatively, is of the noblest kind. And Kamaraj, the only figure which has stood out so far against the soft-pedalled steam-roller of the PM can very well step into the leadership of national dissidence as a whole. But as a pessimist, I must also admit the possibility of the anti-climax of himself going over to the enemy as a counter-weight to the expected demotion of the tall but suspect pop-

pies in the Central cabinet. Swaran Singh's supersession has been underlined by Dhar's role, and that worthy man has not even uttered a whimper. Dilli Ram hit a bull's eye with his cartoon on this for its humour, irony and stark truth make it a classic of its kind. The turn of the others must surely be coming soon!

THE DAILY LE MONDE (Paris) October 2, 1971
PAKISTAN: PRESIDENT YAHYA KHAN IS TRYING TO REGAIN BENGALIS' CONFIDENCE
By Viratelle

The Government of Pakistan has accused India for creating conditions of famine in East Pakistan, by sabotaging the supply boats. According to an official communique issued on 30th September, frog-men, trained in India, were intercepted while they were putting mines near the port of Chittagong. On the other hand, Mr. Bhutto denounced on Wednesday the Soviet interference in Pakistan's internal affairs. He assured President Yahya Khan of the support of his party in restoring democracy in the country. If this democracy is not restored before the end of the year, he added, then, it will be too late to save the country. Six months after the Bengal crisis, the government of General Yahya Khan is trying to regain the confidence of the East Pakistan population and to encourage political life in the country. During the last few weeks, it has granted general amnesty which, however, does not apply to those Bengalis who are charged of criminal acts, especially the Awami League leaders. But, on the other hand thousands of members of para-military forces who rebelled towards the end of March, after having killed their Punjabi officers, are benefitted by this amnesty. This decision constitutes a very important gesture of appeasement, but to say the truth, it has not brought any result.

A civilian government has replaced General Tikka Khan who led the repression against Bengalis. However, people have no illusion about the representative character of the moderate and right wing personalities who are placed under the army's umbrella. Certain politicians in the western wing

have, on the other hand, deplored that transfer of power has taken place in Bengal whereas law and order have not been restored so far. Nevertheless, by-elections will take place in two months to fill the seats vacated by majority of the Awami League elected representatives who have fled to foreign countries. Although eighty of the elected Awami League representatives have retained their mandate, only twenty of them have rallied the government program. One wonders in what conditions these elections will take place. The autonomist party, which had won an overwhelming majority in the last elections, will not participate in these new elections.

Lastly, the Islamabad authorities have adjourned the trial of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman which was to take place in camera in the middle of August. It is generally thought here that the Bengali leader will not be executed, even if he is condemned to death by the Court. In any case, his counsel will appeal for amnesty. Anyway, there is no doubt that these various initiatives of the government, come in response to the pressures brought by certain foreign powers notably the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union—for a political solution. The members of the "Washington Club", in which France is represented have equally preconditioned their economic and financial assistance to the restoration of a civil administration in Dacca. The foreign aid plays a major part in Pakistan's development and its balance of payments. The United States have not suspended its aid and have, since the beginning of the year, supplied $240 millions, for aid to the victims of the cyclone and of the repression in Bengal. It is probable that they will soon ask other members of the consortium for fresh credits to the regime of Islamabad. The Islamabad government wants to create a better impression at a time when the question of Bengal is raised at the United Nations.

The purpose of the time-limit for the by-elections is mostly aimed at gaining time. But its objectives after the by-elections, are not very clear. It is officially asserted that government will always be prepared to grant wide autonomy to the province, provided this status does not disintegrate the largest Muslim country of the world. But, in the present circumstances, they are not thinking to negotiate with the government of Bangla Desh, which Islamabad terms as "India stooges"; official circles declare "they should come and clear themselves before the Court. If they do not come,

then, we will do without them. If India was not helping the infiltrators, then, we could control the situation in a week." In spite of all this, the general impression in Islamabad is that the authorities are concerned by the increasing number of acts of terrorism in East Pakistan, where a minister of the local government, Maulana Mohammed Ishaq, was murdered. The brutal intervention of the army in East Bengal also has its repercussions in the western wing. Mr. Bhutto, who had approved the army's action because it was taken to preserve the unity of the country, is now frequently criticising the policy of the regime, without wanting, however, to break up its contacts.

THE WEEKLY RADIANCE (Delhi) October 3, 1971

BANGLA DESH : THE BURDEN IS TOO HEAVY FOR US

By S.F. Sinha, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court

In several of my articles I had ventured to write that time and tide wait for none and we should, without waiting for a nod of assent from any quarter, extricate ourselves from the quandry we have landed ourselves in. We should never have opened the flood-gates, but if, unfortunately and by mistake, we did we must somehow retrieve the position. The mock heroics of the Jan Sangh and the R.S.S. should not unnerve us.

It is easy to say that we shall spend our last ounce of blood for the Bangla Desh but charity must begin at home and, if I may add, it must unless we have enough and to spare, spend at home. Have we enough even to feed ourselves? Is not the rise in the prices breaking the back of the common man ? It must always be borne in mind that the common man is the back-bone of the country. The Jan Sangh and the R.S.S. may look to Big Business to fill their coffers. The Communists, with their spiritual home in Soviet Russia, may replenish their depleted resources in ways only known to them, but the claims of the common man, who earns his bread with the sweat of his brows, are paramount. He looks askance at this perverse charity—all at his cost.

In my first article I emphasised that the imaginary victories of the Caesar's and Napoleon's or Sultan Saladin's and Tarik Bin Ziad's of Bangla Desh may fill the columns of the newspapers of this country—almost all tendentious, mostly full of embellishments—have ceased to cut any ice now. Since then others have come out with the same view. The latest is Mr. J.J. Singh, a most sincere, a most frank, level headed and conscientious leader, whose article appears in the Amrita Bazar Patrika of September 9, 1971. This is high authority, but the view is fortified by the letter of Mr. Krishna Bhatia from Washington, which appears in "The Hindustan Times" of the one date under the caption. It indicates that the wave of sympathy, genuine or feigned, is also on the wane and the time may soon come when Bangla Desh may find itself marooned on an iceberg, the edges of which are being washed away fastly by time, distance and other natural forces of erosion. I also said that Mr. Edward Kennedy whom we lionised as though he were not Edward, but John Kennedy come back to life, no longer talks in superlatives. I wondered how and why it happened and in such a short time. Mr. Bhatia furnishes a complete answer and I would like to quote a few extracts from his letter:

(a) "Yet the question that followed the speech revealed distressingly what little impact it had on the audience".

(b) "But nearly 500 Americans half of whom were presumably newsmen, were interested in other subjects. Of over 25 questions they asked the Senator only four relating to what he had spoken about".

(c) "One questioner was interested in knowing who the young Senator would choose for his companions should he be shipwrecked on a desert island".

Which means that they did not take Mr. Edward Kennedy seriously. Not only that. They treated him with disdain.

(d) "Even the few questions about the sub-continent they asked revealed that the real focus of their interest was far away from what Islamabad was doing. One wanted to know if the refugees camps in West Bengal represented greater human misery than Palestine".

A very pertinent question indeed for various reasons; the tragedy of Palestine was by no human standard, less harrowing than that of East Bengal. Whatever the Jan

Sangh and R.S.S. and the heroes of Bangla Desh now comfortably lodged in this country, may, the memory of Deir Yassen cannot be obliterated. Nothing further is from my mind than to extenuate the misdeeds of the army in East Bengal. But tyranny must be condemned wherever it is committed—in Palestine by the Jews or in Chad by Christians on the vast majority of the population who happen to be Muslims or by the Army in East Bengal. Virtue or vice, good or evil has no geographical limitations. It must also be mentioned that though the Bangla Desh heroes have denied it, it is established that they practised untold barbarities upon the U.P. and Behari Muslims. They sought refuge in the bordering Nepal, whose enlightened ruler extended to them due kindness, but is now confronted with the problem how to send them back.

Mr. Kennedy must have felt particularly perturbed because in 1967, he was one of the strongest supporters of the Jews, even though they were the worst sinners.

The climax was reached as indicated by the following:

"Another said it was all right about the Senator getting so distressed over Bengali children, but what about the children at home, who are being exposed to drugs. The remaining question was a crude attempt to get Senator Kennedy to describe Mrs. Gandhi as a left-wing Communist". Is not it from the sublimity to the ridiculous? This only means that charity must begin at home, a point I have been pressing hard all along. The crushing burden of the refugees is eating out the very vitals of our existence. The problem be solved immediately even if it involves a revision, or modification or variation of our present policy.

The American attitude is reflected not only in the treatment accorded to Mr. Edward Kennedy by the audience at the National Liberal Club, but still more, by the way the speech was ignored by the news editors also by the television net-works. So completely has New Delhi alienated the U.S.A. on this issue that, according to Mr. Krishna Bhatia, the Washington correspondent of the Hindustan Times, the proposed visit of Mrs. Gandhi to that great country, may prove fruitless. Of course, she will be received with due courtesy, the protocol will be meticulously observed, but that is all. The communists, the card holders and fellow travellers may condemn the U.S.A. and extol the Soviet, but

experience tells us that, whatever its failings, America is a staunch friend and faithful ally, the contrary Russia is mercurial and a most undependable friend. The fate of Hungary and Czechoslavakia bears ample testimony to it. The fate of the Arab World does the same. I would also like to ask the Communists, and also the Rashtravadis whose attitude is determined not by the love of Bangla Desh, because it consists mostly of Muslims whom they detest but by the hate of Pakistan, and still more, by the desire to oust Mrs. Gandhi.

What have they to say to the plain speaking of Mrs. Bandranaik, the Premier of Ceylon ? She has not budged an inch. The rebuff Mr. Swaran Singh had in Nepal was still more humiliating. The Nepal's semi-official paper repudiated the interpretation he had placed on the outcome of the discussions.

Ceylon is a Buddhist State ; it is not Indonesia, Malaya, or a part of the Islamic belt. His Majesty, the King of Nepal is a devout Hindu. Even the Rashtravadis dare not point against him the accusing finger. A word about Mr. Nixon. The recent gallup poll does not show that his popularity is on the wane. What should we expect from the Soviet ? Whatever the window dressing, the terms of the Indo-Soviet treaty rule out the possibility of New Delhi according recognition to Bangla Desh. It may as it does supply arms to the guerrillas. But how long ?

War are not won by the avalanche of propaganda of which the Bangla Desh heroes seem to be past masters. The fate of Biafra bears ample testimony to it. It is also true that guerrillas do not and cannot win a War. As Mr. Manekekar the former Resident Editor of "The Times of India", at Delhi, said on September 8, 1971. Wars are won in the battle-field. Despite all the aid given by the Vatican and the entire Catholic World, nothing could stand in the way of Yakubo Gowan's success. Indeed, not only did he inflict a most crushing defeat on the secessionists of Biafra, but showed the Pontiff his proper place. Yakubo Gowan did in Nigeria, what, centuries ago Abraham Lincoln had done in America.

That man, one of the greatest the World has ever produced, will not have America cut into two. Secession does not pay ; this is the lesson history has taught us. Whatever the initial mistake, Mrs. Gandhi thoroughly

condemned an adventurist policy. Even in March when the odds were not so heavy, she never thought of it. Today the dice is so heavy loaded that adventurism or recklessness is absolutely out of question. Before the Indo-Soviet treaty, various factors dictated this policy of caution, America and China, respect for World opinion. Today that treaty has put an embargo on it at least for all practical purposes.

The next question is how and how long we shall stand the strain of feeding, clothing and supporting the sea of humanity ? How long shall we treat them as honoured and welcome guests at the cost of the children of the soil ? The flood have rendered hundreds and thousands in U.P., Bihar, and Bengal homeless and destitute. They have a prior claim. I remember very well that during and immediately after the holocaust of 1947, Pandit Gobind Ballabh Pant whose practical sense of reality never forsook him, told the refugees at Dehradun that India was alive to their needs and claims, but they could not be placed higher than those of the children of the soil. New Delhi should always bear in mind the weighty words of wise counsel of that great statesman. What has it done for the flood stricken people who have lost their all ? A great deal no doubt, but not comparable to our sacrifices for the refugees. Mr. Chavan's recent speech at Calcutta has given rise to great misgivings in the minds of the refugees also in the mind of the Bengalis generally.

A friend of mine, member of the English bar from West Bengal told me the other day that the lot of the refugees was unenviable. To use his own words "the refugee camps are camps of sorrow. On the analogy of the Chinese "River of sorrow", he added "if the advice of Mr. Chavan is followed the camps will be camps of misery". I felt so shocked that I felt like blurting out. "This is the unkindest cut of all".

But, the remark did not come to me as a surprise. I too feel that the refugees will not be grateful or friendly to us, whether they stay or go back. They dare not speak out their minds frankly. Are they not unreliable ? Not only the Jan Sangh and the R.S.S. but even Mrs. Nandini Sayapathi and Mr. Chandrajit Yadav would have come down heavily upon them.

"The Times of India" of September 12, 1971 publishes the letters of Mr. G. I. Vingese which has sounded a note of

warning. The warning proceeds from an unimpeachable quarter and must be given due consideration.

I disagree with the view that since India has signed a treaty with the Soviet Union, it can openly help the Mukti Bahini without inviting retaliation from Pakistan. Under the Indo-Soviet Treaty India might get arms from the Soviet Union. Likewise, Pakistan may also get aid from the U.S.A. and possibly from China'.

Therefore the Bangla Desh screw has to be tightened slowly without bringing ourselves in direct confrontation with Pakistan and at the same time a face-saving formula should be held out whereby the Military Junta may arrive at a compromise with Mujibur Rahman's followers. In my opinion it would be indevisable for us to insist that only a solution on our own terms is acceptable to us.

This is what I have been insisting upon. President Yahya offered to talk to Mrs. Gandhi, but the offer was spurned. He was incensed. The present ruler of Bangla Desh is saying the same. We seize the opportunity.

I wonder India has realised the implications of a free Bangla Desh. The entire burden of keeping afloat a starving war-ravaged country will fall on India without the international community doing much in the matter'.

This is common sense. Mrs. Gandhi realises this and refuses, therefore, to be stamped by people usually holding views so divergent as Mr. Krishna Menon and Mr. Atal Behari Bajpayee, united today by the common bond of hatred of Pakistan. Her hands must be strengthened against the onslaughts inspired by blind passion and inveterate prejudice.

Before I close I would like to say a word about an important matter. The Bangla Desh has, over the months, strained the nerves of the Muslims in this country. They feel that they dare not speak out their minds freely even, if, in their view Bangla Desh is wrong. What is permissible, they say, to Guru Golwalkar, or Guru Shankaracharya or the Hindu Sabha—they have opposed the recognition of Bangla Desh—is not permissible to them. Leave aside the Jan Sangh and the Rashtravadis, even the super patriots of the Congress, people like Mrs. Nandini Sayapathi and Mr. Chandrajit Yadav,

will cry for their heads on charger. Should they speak out their minds?

I have deemed it necessary to invite the attention of the Prime Minister to this, owing to some recent developments. The Urdu papers in U.P. and Bihar resented the attack on U.P. and Bihari Muslims by the Bengali Muslims. They deplored the attitude of the so-called Nationalist Press, but were not surprised because if they knew that barring The Hindustan Times, all are steeped in prejudice against the Muslims.

They disbelieved the Bangla Desh heroes and rightly so, because their own kith and kin had suffered. They could not disbelieve their own eyes.

THE DAILY MOTHERLAND (New Delhi) October 3, 1971
MURDER MYSTERIES OF PAKISTAN : AN ARTICLE

One by one the sordid secrets of the Pakistani dictators are coming out, the latest to come to light relates to the alleged murder of Fatima Jinnah. The judicial commission of Pakistan has concluded that Fatima Jinnah, the sister of the late Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah did not die a natural death. A strong demand for an enquiry into the death of Fatima Jinnah was being raised in Pakistan for quite some time, and the Martial Law authorities were forced to appoint a judicial commission for the purpose.

Those who were pressing for this demand included Miyan Manzur Basheer, President of the Pak Justice Party, who had based the demand for such a high level enquiry on a sensational report published in Nai Roshni, a Karachi daily. The four persons who gave the last bath to Miss Fatima Jinnah have disclosed that she had a gaping four-inch stab wound on her back and a hole in her belly, and her clothes and bed were blood-stained.

Although thus the alleged murder of Fatima Jinnah had been substantiated it has not been known so far who murdered

her. So this continues to be a mystery, even as the murder of Liaquat Ali Khan, the first and only constitutional Prime Minister of Pakistan, remains a mystery as even in his case the identity of the murderer has not been so far established.

Now Begum Suleman Akhtar, daughter of the late Mr. H.S. Suhrawardy, has disclosed that she had reason to believe her father had been murdered by men specially sent by Ayub Khan.

As a matter of fact, this brings to five the number of suspicious deaths of top political leaders since Pakistan was created. The first of them was none other than Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, founder of Pakistan. Jinnah had been ailing since before partition, but after partition the strain of hectic political activity damaged his health. To his immediate political associates, it was clear that he would not recover if he continued to strain himself. He was, therefore, sent to Quetta for rest and recuperation accompanied by a paraphernalia of doctors.

In Quetta he fell seriously ill and somebody decided, for some mysterious reason, that it was necessary to bring him in that perilous state of health to Karachi regardless of the consequences for him. He was put on a plane for Karachi, but strangely the paraphernalia of doctors stayed behind. Stranger still, when the plane arrived in Karachi, there was nobody to receive him. Only a lone rickety car with a nurse had been sent to the airport.

Not one political leader, doctor or official was on hand to receive the founder of Pakistan. He was dumped in the car and started the journey to his residence in Karachi. On the way, the lone car mysteriously broke down and the weakened and weakening Jinnah was in the hands of a lone nurse. Witnesses who saw him say he had no strength left to move his hand to shoo away flies swarming on his face. Ultimately the car was mended and restarted, and when it reached its destination Jinnah was dead.

THE SUNDAY STAR (Washington) October 3, 1971

IN INDIA, THEY'RE SAFE—AND STAYING

Will They Go Back—Or Stay ?

By John E. Frazer From New Delhi

It is now six months since the first column of frightened refugees from East Pakistan trudged into India. After six months, said Indira in March, they will go back—"they must go back."

But the reality now is different. The 8.3 million refugees, except for 150,000 of them, are not going back, and they are unlikely to go back for another six months or far longer.

In fact, still others are crossing by land and water into India at the current rate of 14,000 a day, as hunger, fear, and guerrilla warfare drive them out.

Recently I watched from a rise of land in India overlooking a little river in East Pakistan as new arrivals came in.

From a grassy marsh, not 300 yards away, a long country boat moved on the water, paddled by a Pakistani boatman. In the unpainted craft huddled a Hindu household of 10 or 12—women, children, two men, their clothes in tin trunks, few utensils dangling, and the saris of the women wet almost to the waist from walking in marshes while escaping.

"We are not thinking of keeping a single one." Siddartha Sankar Ray, Union Minister for Education and West Bengal Affairs, had said in an interview a few days earlier in Calcutta.

But that Hindu household and millions of other refugees lodged in thatched huts alongside verdant rice fields or in tents shielded from rain by polyethylene sheets, are thinking otherwise; they will stay.

They are hardly comfortable; they are packed in camps like sardines; sanitation is deplorable. But they have enough to eat (except the protein-hungry babies and nursing mothers) —more food, actually, than 50 million Indians eat—and they are safe.

This is really why they will stay: in India they are safe.

But India scarcely dares to face the consequences of 8.3

million foreigners living indefinitely under such conditions. The money cost alone (though shared in part by the United States, the United Nations, and other sources) will be roughly $1 billion a year—simply beyond India's resources. And government work almost everywhere in the four invaded states, West Bengal, Assam, Tripura and Meghalaya, has come to a halt.

"Our 1971-72 development programme has not started at all," said N.C. Gupta chief secretary of the West Bengal government. "Everybody is working on the refugees."

Sooner or later, therefore, India must make a hard choice.

The first is to accept the stark, unwelcome fact that Pakistan has succeeded in forcing up on India some 8 million people, 90 percent of them Hindus; that most of them will never go back, and like the Poles and the White Russians of years past in Europe, they had best be absorbed and dispersed throughout India's 28 states and federal territories.

Publicly, India refuses even to entertain this solution.

A second possibility is for India covertly to help the Mukti Bahini—the Liberation Army—to overthrow the Pakistan army in East Pakistan, establish an independent nation, and thus clear the way for the prompt return of the refugees.

Again, publicly no one will state that this is India's objective. Nevertheless, signs are not wanting that India is turning to such a solution.

It is an open secret that arms and training for the Mukti Bahini come, in part, from India. In New Delhi, on September 3, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said that it is not possible for any power to crush or suppress the movement for Bangla Desh (the Bengal nation).

Private voices are bolder. Said R.K. Nehru, vice-chancellor of Allahabad University and former secretary-general of the Ministry of External Affairs, early this month, "the situation in Bangla Desh provides an ideal opportunity for us to bring about a break-up of Pakistan."

Naturally, Pakistan will not sit still for such an alternative. The greater the thrust of the Mukti Bahini, the greater the chance of a Vietnam-type guerrilla war, and the larger the influx of new refugees into India.

There is still a third possibility. "I could see a settlement short of total independence," an official in India's External Affairs Ministry, said quietly two months ago.

Sometime, perhaps before chaos, it may come to this. But even then, will the refugees go back? At this point, no one knows.

THE GUARDIAN (London) October 6, 1971
EDITORIAL: BENGAL—MONEY AND DIPLOMACY

The week has been thick with gloom about Pakistan's displaced nine million. At Brighton, Labour publishes a peremptory statement expressing grave concern over "the totally inadequate response of the world community to Bengal's vast refugee problem." Oxfam announces, with open desperation, that "tens of thousands of children face slow death". In Geneva, Prince Sadruddin Khan, keeper of UN refugees, proclaimed acute and appalling crisis: unless world aid to Bengal (which has dwindled to a "trickle") rapidly swells once more, India expects death tolls to make the Bihari famine seem a vicarage tea party.

Of course, such prophecies never precisely come to pass. The aid officers on the spot who predict catastrophe tomorrow will always find their instant doom turning to slow and complex disaster—disaster stripped of glib dramatics, numbing disaster which exhausts public patience because there is no single down payment to make it go away. Nevertheless, the Prince and Harold Wilson and Oxfam are, in essence, right. Bengal is a crucial test of world civilisation. If the children die we are all indicted. Perhaps nobody can sell enough charity flags. Perhaps an airport in Essex excites more voluble mass condemnation. Perhaps no coherent means exists to pressurise Whitehall. Nevertheless, the guilt is there and the guilt is shared. Nevertheless.

Yet it must also be said that Sadruddin Khan and his fellow UN committeemen cannot be allowed to escape with pure exhortation; and that no nation, or world community, can realistically be expected to succour nine million refugees indefi-

nitely. We must pay today, but Governments and international forums must not rest content with mere cash flows. West Bengal's camps of squalor represent, starkly, a country in tatters, the rubble of united Pakistan. These refugees are not the result of some unimaginable natural phenomenon, a flood to dwarf last December's. They are the direct result of political and military action—action that can be reversed. Yahya's army drove them from their pitiful paddy fields. Now Yahya must get them back. Without this hope, in the context of Calcutta and its already abject environs, the millions face gradual disintegration.

There are tardy but distinct signs from Islamabad that the enormity of the blunder and the situation are sinking in. Gradually a bloody, desperate predicament in the backlands of Bangla Desh is forcing reappraisal. But the United States, as Senator Kennedy revealed this week, is still supplying millions of dollars worth of military hardware to Yahya's army. The United Nations has not even formally addressed itself to a world political crisis which could yet lead to sub-continental war. Pakistan, as Oxfam believes, can be moved. But only by unrelenting diplomatic attack. Without this attack, all the money to save the starving may merely prolong a frightful agony. Governments must find the money and keep up the diplomatic pressure.

THE INDONESIAN OBSERVER (Jakarta) October 7, 1971
EDITORIAL: A HARD PRESSED REGIME

Time is fast running out for Pakistan's military regime under General Yahya Khan as the combined forces of public opinion in the world as well as within the country itself exert great pressure for political economic reforms. Yahya Khan's desperate attempt to avert his country's total bankruptcy by announcing general amnesty and the replacement of East Pakistan's military governor by a civilian has not aroused the least interest among the 9 million refugees from East Pakistan in India. The Pakistan President has not touched the essential core of the problem in promising a

lenient attitude towards the refugees. He did not mention about the future legislature of Pakistan as result of the general elections of last December in which the Awami League achieved an overwhelming victory.

Overlooking this problem will not bring the crisis in Pakistan an inch closer to solution. Meanwhile, as the days wear on without a clear political solution in sight, Pakistan's plight becomes the more unbearable. With the spectre of financial bankruptcy looming ahead and the economy in shambles, even the most optimistic supporters of Yahya Khan's regime would not dare to predict how much longer it will last.

Pakistan's effort to arouse sympathy for her position by way of exaggerating India's role in supporting the Bangla Desh idea has also failed to hoodwink the world towards the developments in East Pakistan. Sooner or later President Yahya must take a clear-cut stand on the problem of East Pakistan and its connection with the general election. The sooner he does so, the better for the country because only then it will be able to draft concrete plans for recovery.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS (New Delhi), October 8, 1971
PINDI MAY 'BARTER' BANGLA FOR KASHMIR
PTI - Report From New Delhi

A senior Pakistan diplomat, who has defected to Bangla Desh, says the West Pakistani rulers are reconciled to the eventual loss of Bangla Desh but would try to grab Kashmir to placate public opinion in their country. Mr. Humayun Rashid Choudhury, till recently Minister Counsellor and Head of Chancery at the Pakistan High Commission here, also says that West Pakistanis have been whipped up into a hysteria that India was now to grab their territory and are therefore willing to fight India. Mr. Choudhury was interviewed tonight along with Mr. K. Subrahmanyam, Director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, on the All India Radio television by Dr. Mohammed Ayub of the Nehru University.

Supplementing Mr. Choudhury, Mr. Subrahmanyam said West Pakistan would attack Rajasthan simultaneously with Kashmir and try to adopt a defensive posture on the Punjab plains. Mr. Subrahmanyam said that India has a numerical superiority over Pakistan both in the Army and in the Air Force. The West Pakistani army had some 3,65,000 men whereas the Indian Army had 8,00,000 men. The former's Air Force had 280 aircraft as against Indian Air Force's 600. Mr. Subrahmanyam added that the outcome of a war would, however, depend on the deployment. India had also to watch the northern border with China.

Mr. Choudhury made several visits to West Pakistan between March this year and his defection earlier this week. There he met several friends and relatives recently back from Bangla Desh. Giving his appreciation of the relative morale in the two regions, he said: "The morale of Bangla Desh people is tremendously high—admirable because of all that they have gone through. They are confident that theirs is the ultimate victory".

On the other hand, the morale in West Pakistan is sagging very, very fast. They are convinced that they are going to lose Bangla Desh. They are worried how to explain this to the people of West Pakistan who have sustained them, he said. "If at some stage, it becomes difficult to stay in Bangla Desh, they would not like to get trapped. They will pull out from there but they will go in for Kashmir. There has been for some years a lot of talk in West Pakistan about bartering Bangla Desh for Kashmir". Mr. Subrahmanyam, agreeing with Mr. Choudhury, noted that Pakistan has been trying to buy Russian and East European arms to equip "Mujahids" to be sent into Kashmir. He said the immediate objective of West Pakistan is to make a major military effort to stamp out the Mukti Bahini. They would shift troops to Bangla Desh but they have to watch out on the West Pakistan border with India at the same time. He also observed that the present rulers of West Pakistan would rather lose to India than give in to democratic forces within the country.

NEW YORK TIMES October 11, 1971

HORRORS OF EAST PAKISTAN TURNING HOPE INTO DESPAIR

By Malcolm M. Browne

Dacca Oct. 10 :—The horror of life in East Pakistan shows every sign of becoming permanently institutionalised, and most, if not all, the foreigners who came hoping to help are on the verge of despair.

In particular, the chances of reversing the tide of millions of destitute refugees who have fled to India seem remote. Most governments consider the refugee problem the main catalyst in the atmosphere of war prevailing on the sub-continent.

India charges that military terror in East Pakistan since the central government moved against the Bengali seperatists on March 25 has driven nine million refugees across her borders. Those people, the Indians say, are an intolerable drain on already vastly overtaxed economic resources and a force that could result in a political catastrophe or internal warfare.

The New Delhi Government has hinted that as a last resort it might try to change the situation in East Pakistan by force to induce the refugees, whom Pakistan numbers at less than a third of the Indian figure, to leave India. Pakistan has hastened her own preparations for war. Major troop movements have been reported here and in India in the past few weeks.

The Soviet Union, China and the United States, among other nations, are deeply entangled in the tend. The United Nations and other international organisations have been working with great urgency to alleviate the misery and especially to prevent a war.

Dozens of government have teams of experts, technicians and diplomats working in East Pakistan. The United Nations in East Pakistan Relief Operation alone has 75 officials here.

There is some disagreement among the hundreds of foreign officials about the techniques by which the refugees

could be repatriated. But there is apparent unanimity on one subject that East Pakistan should overcome its reputation as a place of endless horror and suffering.

To that end many governments, including that of the United States, have pressed the Pakistani Government at Islamabad for fundamental changes in East Pakistan, among them these :

No Real Progress Discerned

The end of police and military terror directed against thousands of political suspects and millions of non-Moslem members of ethnic and religious minorities.

A reasonably representative government in Dacca, capable of restoring the faith of East Pakistan's population in the future of democracy.

A much more convincing effort by the central government to relieve the physical suffering wrought on East Pakistan's predominantly Bengali population by flood, cyclone and war in the last year.

The consensus among the foreigners working here is that there has been no real progress in any of these areas.

Whispered conversations with Bengalis still have to do largely with alleged atrocities by the occupation army, which is largely made up of West Pakistanis and is hated by most of the population.

One tale that is widely believed and seems to come from many different sources is that 563 women picked up by the army in March and April and held in military brothels are not being released because they are pregnant beyond the point at which abortions are possible.

A Government spokesman denied the report and challenged any accuser to name the place where the women are supposed to be held. On the other hand, a number of Bengali gynaecologists are known to have been performing many abortions on girls held at army installations and released.

Two Of Three Released

In a clandestine meeting elaborately arranged to elude military surveillance, a Bengali farmer told this correspondent about one such experience. Talking with great reticence and glancing around in fear that he had been led into a police trap, he said.

"The army came to the village on the night of April 11. One patrol led me away from my house to identify some thing, and when I got back I found my sister was missing. Another girl, the daughter of a neighbour, was gone, and there was a Hindu family whose girl was missing."

"In the middle of May they released my sister and the neighbour's daughter, but the Hindu girl still gone. The two girls who came back are both pregnant and will have their babies. At the place where they were kept there were 200 or 300 girls doing the same thing. They had to wash clothing and to make love to soldiers two or three times a day".

"My sister does not know where she was kept", the farmer added.

Many Dacca residents, including foreigners tell of having seen young women taken away by military policemen without even identification check.

Other people, obscure and prominent are also subject to arbitrary arrest although President Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan proclaimed a general amnesty for political prisoners last month and his action was warmly applauded by foreign diplomats seeking political accommodation in East Pakistan. The diplomats who now say that the amnesty was purely cosmetic, report that the Government not only has failed to release any important prisoners but also has continued arresting politicians, professors, lawyers and others by the hundreds.

According to a number of reports, some from foreign observers, a number of persons under amnesty have been arrested and shot.

The Most Prominent Prisoner

The most prominent prisoner is Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, universally acknowledged as the political and spiritual leader

of East Bengal. Sheikh Mujib's Awami League party won a sweeping election victory last December for National Assembly seats allocated to East Pakistan and he had been scheduled to become Prime Minister of all of Pakistan.

Most diplomats and other foreigners believe that a resolution of the East Pakistani crisis can be found only if Sheikh Mujib is permitted to exercise the role of leadership in East Pakistan to which he was elected. But he remains a prisoner undergoing a secret military trial and facing a possible death sentence.

Members of his family while not accused of any crime are held as virtual prisoners here.

Such political repression was extended not only to Awami League but to any politician or group likely to embarrass the military regime.

The effect was dramatically underscored last week by a former chief of the Air Force, who decided to try running for public office in view of the government's announced intention of moving toward democratic processes.

The officer, Mohammad Asghar Khan, a retired Air Marshal, is known throughout Pakistan as a patriot and political moderate. He commanded the Air force in 1965 during Pakistan's brief but bloody war with India and has always insisted that Pakistan remain one country.

Programme Was Censored

Mr. Asghar Khan, a West Pakistani and a leader of the movement that brought about the collapse of President Mohammad Ayub Khan's government in 1968 offered a conciliatory programme calling for major developmental efforts in East Pakistan and genuine political freedom for its people, but it has been completely censored. On Friday he announced that no candidate could run unless he could reach the public through the press, so he has withdrawn.

"Today is a black day for the democracy in Pakistan", he said, "when even I, with a mild programme breaking martial law regulations, am frozen out."

When the army occupied East Pakistan and banned the Awami League the election was in effect annulled. Some

elected assemblymen were cleared by the army to take their seats but most had fled to India or joined guerrillas.

In July President Yahya Khan announced that bye-election would be held to fill the seats. Government approved candidates and parties, most of them strongly rightwing and fundamentalist. Moslems and all heavily escorted by troops, have begun giving speeches in East Pakistan, and are reported on at length in the "CONTROLLED PRESS". All have advocated a war to finish against miscreants and Indian agents —words invariably used by the Government to describe the Bengali guerrillas.

Meanwhile the anguish of war continues in the countryside. The guerrillas are taking an increasing toll of the occupation army and medical circles report growing numbers of bodies of soldiers. The guerrillas are also said to be assassinating members of the local "peace committees", civilian groups made up mostly of non-Bengalis and assigned to carry out army administration of occupied areas.

When troops or peace committees are attacked, the army burns hamlets to the ground in reprisal, and local reports usually tell of heavy losses of life.

In the prevailing circumstances, according to most foreign observers stationed here, the refugee crisis and the other major problems are not susceptible of solution, however, much foreign assistance is poured in. It is susceptibly unlikely they say, that East Pakistan's Hindu minority, about 10 per cent of the March population of 75 million, will ever return in any number.

The Hindus were particular targets of the soldiers. Hindu communities and shops burned out by the army stand deserted, their temples smashed.

The Government have made it plain that Hinduism will no longer be tolerated in East Pakistan ; to reinforce the point the new civilian governor, Dr. A. M. Malik did not appoint a Hindu to his interim cabinet.

Centres No Longer Visited

A foreign relief worker, reflecting the failure of government's amnesty, said, "we no longer bother to visit the



With loving hands Bangabandhu touches the bowed head of a follower.
National Geographic Magazine, September, '72.



Refugee and his dead child.
Time : 21-6-71.



Bangladesh Guerrillas in a Jungle waiting for Pakistani soldiers.



A dead Pakistani soldier.
Photo : Kishor Parekh.



The refugees sit bewildered at their flight's end.
Photo : Kishor Parekh.

government's 60 or so refugee reception centres. It is obvious they are coming back in more than a tiny trickle—none in some areas".

"At one place," he added, "we discovered that the government had a staff of professional refugees that they brought out whenever visitor came to show that something was going on".

"The army authorities tell you there are 2,000 refugees at some camps, another expert related, "you go there and find a handful of people wandering around, and under continued questioning the authorities agree—may be there are only 200".

There are universal complaints that even in the matter of humanitarian relief the army has commandeered all available trucks, cars, motor-launches and boats—the only available means of moving food or supplies until foreign relief vehicles can be brought in.

Blame Put On India

The government insists that all or most of the troubles would disappear if India would end her "provocations" and stop infiltrating men and arms into East Pakistan.

The Pakistanis say India's warlike actions are demonstrated by her unwillingness to allow United Nations of a military peace keeping force between East Pakistan and India through which refugees could move if they choose. It seems unlikely that either country would agree to such a move.

The pessimism among foreign observers are formidable.

"There is really nothing anyone with any amount of money can do for East Pakistan," a relief expert commented. "It seems the population of the sub-continent doubles every generation, it will only get worse".

"My own feeling", he added, "and I know lots of us share it, is that the outside world might, just as well, pull out now AND LET THING HERE TAKE THEIR INEVITABLE COURSE".

U.S. DIPLOMATIC MESSAGES, R.T.T. File October 12, 1971
NESA-1
SOUTH ASIA REPORTING IN U.S. PRESS (950)
NEW YORK TIMES' SYDNEY H. SCHANBERG WRITES FROM CALCUTTA:

"Last week, with the refugee population swollen to 9 million, West Bengal, the Indian state on the East Pakistani border, was in an explosive condition."

As a result "....the temptation to get rid of the crushing refugee burden by intervening in the fighting across the border—even if that meant another war with Pakistan—was growing for Indians all the way up to the government in New Delhi."

Schanberg continues: "What the Indians fear most is that the tension might take on a communal colour—most of the East Pakistan refugees are Hindus terrorised by the Moslem West Pakistani army — and touch off a nationwide chain reaction in which India's majority Hindus would take revenge on the country's 60 million Moslems.

On the subject of possible Indian intervention, he says: "Even if the Indians do not immediately sanction a full-scale thrust to seize major territory, where at least some of the refugees could go back to live, reports here indicate that New Delhi is increasing its arms supply to the guerrillas and that there will be a sharp increase in guerrilla activity within a few weeks—'A big punch' as one Bangla Desh official described it." On Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's forthcoming tour of Western capitals, he says:

"If Mrs. Gandhi gets nothing but more urgings of caution and restraint and comes home feeling that India is being abandoned or isolated, then caution and restraint may be the next casualties on this disturbed sub-continent."

Baltimore Sun's Adam Clymer reporting from Washington says that despite mounting hostility, guerrilla activity and the massing of troops on both sides of the India-Pakistan borders, "the best guess in Washington, which has been

wrong before, is that war in the next few months is unlikely to be either nation's deliberate choice, and that Rawalpindi and, New Delhi probably can prevent 'Accidental' conflict."

All the arguments, he says, are based in two keys expectations :

That Soviet influence with India and American influence with Pakistan will operate as important levers of restraint—that each country would risk more than it could expect to gain by choosing war.

Reporting from New Delhi, Clymer says.. .situations are gloomier than the consensus in Washington with "some highly informed observers"—seeing war as inevitable. "There seems to be little doubt," Clymer says, "the forces on both sides are ready for war and that there are enough of them, tense after weeks of being in the alert—especially the Air Forces — so that greater border incidents are almost inevitable."

The arguments for India starting a war, he says, are fairly simple. As the refugee problem becomes an intolerable financial and social burden, India could come to the conclusion that the longer East Pakistan independence was in coming, the more radical its leaders would become and decide that something should be done immediately. Such a move, he adds, would probably halt American Economic and Refugee Aid.

The arguments for Pakistan starting a war are fewer, he says, since, "there could be little real hope of a military victory for Pakistan." But if the Yahya Khan regime concludes it has no hope of restoring effective control over East Pakistan, he says, it might resort to a desperate military strike, feeling that even if it lost East Pakistan, the blame somehow could be fixed on the big powers and not on the failure on Pakistani leaders.

Those who fear a war say the most risky time will come in late November after Prime Minister Indira Gandhi returns from abroad, probably dissatisfied with promises from foreign capitals, including Washington — then "the lid could be blown off," reports Clymer.

Baltimore Sun's Pran Sabharwal in New Delhi says that, according to "responsible Awami League sources," Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has already been sentenced to death by the special military tribunal set up to try him; and that, according to other "reliable sources," President Yahya will probably commute the sentence in a public broadcast tonight.

U.S. DIPLOMATIC MESSAGE, R.T.T. File October 13, 1971
NESA-21
SOUTH ASIA REPORTING IN U.S. PRESS (330)

New York Times' Malcolm M. Browne in Karachi comments on President Yahya Khan's Tuesday night Broadcast announcing that a national assembly will be convened on December 27, 1971, followed by elections to fill the seats vacated after the army moved to crush the East Pakistan autonomy movement. In fact, says Browne, only a handful of the remaining assemblymen not disqualified from their seats are expected to come forward. Many have fled to India.

Baltimore Sun's Pran Sabharwal in New Delhi notes that President Yahya's broadcast, which many observers expected would outline his plan for settlement of the crisis in East Pakistan, was silent on matters concerning reconciliation or political accommodation with the rebels.

Los Angeles Times' William J. Drummond, in a despatch in the Washington Post from New Delhi, says that about three-quarters of Yahya's 35 minute address was devoted to accusations against India. He says Yahya's claim that 200,000 refugees had returned to Pakistan after he declared a general amnesty is contrasted with a recent report by Rev. Peter B. Freling Huysen (Republican-New Jersey), who on his return from East Pakistan said he had not seen a single returnee in the camps the Pakistan government had set up to welcome back those who had fled.

An Associated Press despatch from Rawalpindi in the Christian Science Monitor says that despite continuing resistance in Dacca, at major ports of Chittagong and Chalna, along the borders, and in the interior in Mymensingh and Munshiganj, the East Pakistani rebels have not claimed enough ground so that even their stoutest allies, the Indians, would recognise an indepedent Bangla Desh. The ground is too soft now for vehicles or for troops on foot, the despatch adds, but it will harden next month about the time relief agencies are making an immense effort to move food about to avert famine. "Virtually all parties," it is reported, "fear

that the scarcity of food will launch another large refugee exodus into India, intensifying the danger of open war between Pakistan and India."

New York Times' Sydney H. Schanberg In Calcutta Says:

"The flow of heavily guarded freight trains into Calcutta indicates that India has agreed to give the Guerrillas more arms, but it does not necessarily mean she is prepared to give them what they really want. Logistic support and air cover for a frontal push into East Pakistan.

South Asia Reporting 3

Seize Control Of A Chunk Of Territory

"There are many rumours about the possibility of another Indian-Pakistani war. A brief but bloody one was fought in 1965. But there is no strong evidence that it is imminent, and the troop movements may be elaborate psychological warfare —Schanberg says.

HERALD TRIBUNE (New York) October 13, 1971

MUJIBUR IS REPORTEDLY FOUND GUILTY

New Delhi, Oct. 12. The Pakistan military tribunal that tried the East Pakistani leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, for "treason" has found him 'guilty' and recommended the death penalty, authoritative Indian sources said today.

The trial was said to have been concluded ten days ago and the recommendation has been sent to President Yahya Khan. An Indian official source said that the verdict of the secret trial has been circulated to all the diplomatic missions of Pakistan. The Indian officials obtained the information from a Pakistani diplomat who had defected.

U.S.—Soviet Pressure

According to Indian sources, the United States and Soviet Union have been urging Mr. Yahya not to carry out the

verdict of the military court. The expectation here is that the Pakistani President might accede to the request to demonstrate the genuineness of his recent amnesty offer to all "those who had wavered from the chosen path".

Sheikh Mujibur, who was head of the autonomy movement of the 75 million Bengalis of East Pakistan, was seized by the military authorities on March 25 when they launched an attack on his followers in an attempt to repress the movement.

HERALD TRIBUNE (Paris) October 16, 1971
PAKISTAN GETTING NORTH KOREAN ARMS
Report By Benjamin Welles From Washington

The Sipsah, an 8,000 ton Pakistani ship, has recently unloaded crates of North Korean small arms and ammunition at Karachi, well informed sources reported here yesterday. The vessel arrived at Karachi on September 18 from Hungnam, North Korea, the sources said.

They also reported that Pakistan and North Korea had signed agreements for the opening of consulates in each other's countries. North Korea is about to open a consulate in Dacca, the provincial capital of East Pakistan, the Washington sources said. Meanwhile, the U.S. State Department has expressed concern over reports of increasing troop build-ups on both sides of the Indian-Pakistani border. It said that it had been urging restraint on both governments. But Robert J. McCloskey, the State Department spokesman, yesterday denied reports from Pakistan that the United States had offered to mediate in the civil war in East Pakistan. He said that the United States had urged the Pakistani government to seek political reconciliation. The reported arms delivery to Pakistan was the first from North Korea that officials here could recall. They said it was unclear whether the shipment was the result of a commercial sale or government transaction.

Pakistan is a member of the Central Treaty Organisations with the United States and has received $2 billion in arms

from the United States since 1954, official said. Some officials here suggested that the Soviet Union, which recently signed a treaty of friendship with India, might be seeking to maintain friendly links with Pakistan as well by furnishing arms through North Korea. These officials stressed that the Soviet Union and North Korea closely coordinate their activities. Other well-informed sources discounted, however, the suggestion, saying that China was a more likely source of the arms.

"The Communist Chinese have been cozying up to the North Koreans lately", one source commented. "This would fit in with China's standing policy of supplying arms to Pakistan—but without publicity".

THE LA LIBRE BELGIQUE (Brussels) October 18, 1971
EDITORIAL: RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GREAT POWERS

Is war going to be added to the drama of millions of Bengali refugees? Every day, on the roads leading to Calcutta, this capital of Indian poverty, Bengali men, women and children, all coming out in miserable conditions from East Pakistan, chased by an army which wishes to make the place empty, die from hunger and disease. Tomorrow, will we see more victims made through war? Is there going to be an end to this absurd situation ?

The world is today taking account of the width of this tragedy of the 10 million Bengalis threatened by death. The solidarity movement is growing day by day. Because one must help these unfortunate people and no one can rest indifferent to their misery. But the funds which have been collected here and elsewhere could better be used to serve the rehabilitation of Bengalis in their own country and permit them to reconstruct it. And here, one comes to the heart of the problem which is political. The question arises today: Can we leave a Government, that of Pakistan, to continue to chase out, day after day, the Bengalis from their own country and thus create a dangerous tension with India? Is it admissible that in the name of grand international strategy, the U.S. Government furnishes, by one hand, arms to the Pakistani

leaders, who throw out the Bengalis on the exile route and from the other hand, doles out aid to these refugees which enables them to survive in their exile ?

The reply in Washington is that Pakistan has regional importance in the Asian sub-continent, that Peking is supporting her, while Moscow has aligned itself with India through a friendship treaty of 20 years and that the United States must therefore play its role.

But has not President Nixon opened the era of dialogue in meeting the Chinese and the Soviets ? And should not one of the objectives of this dialogue be to put an end to this absurd game : that millions of refugees should pay through their suffering for the global designs of the Great Powers of the world.

HERALD TRIBUNE (International) October 18, 1971
EDITORIAL :
TITO IN INDIA

In a time of personal diplomacy, when old moulds are being shattered by the journeys of a Japanese emperor and the impending visits of an American President to Peking and Moscow, the arrival of President Tito in New Delhi has a traditional air. It is Tito's fifth trip to India since 1954; it is the customary exchange of courtesies between Yugoslavia and India, leaders among the "non-aligned" nations.

But the atmosphere surrounding the meeting between President Tito and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is quite different from that which prevailed during the Yugoslav leader's earlier journeys to New Delhi. For one thing, he comes there at a time of acute tension between India and Pakistan, when the trouble in East Pakistan have produced military repression which has driven millions into India, and India is actively supporting the independence movement of Bangla Desh. But the troubles of the divided sub-continent go back before the beginning of independence there, and thus appears old—at least—as Yugoslavia's own independence from

Moscow. More fundamental (if less immediately perilous) changes have taken place since Tito and Jawaharlal Nehru were the most outstanding representatives of non-alignment of the third world force that was to emerge from the shadows of the two super-powers, the United States and the Soviet Union.

Yugoslavia has modified its relationship with the Soviet Union, although it still maintains its absolute sovereignty India has an alliance with the Soviet Union, partly out of fear of a war with Pakistan, partly because the old rapport which Nehru once enjoyed with Chou-En-Lai (in the days when "peaceful co-existence" was their slogan) was broken by the frontier war. Non-alignment does not mean to Mrs. Gandhi what it once did to Pandit Nehru.

Moreover, the whole concept of non-alignment has altered. With the United States and the Soviet Union no longer facing one another with nuclear missiles poised, with the United States and the People's Republic of China making pacific gestures, the outlines of the old, sharp alignment are blurred, and the space between them no longer is clear cut.

President Tito and Mrs. Gandhi will, no doubt, have much to discuss in this new context. Tito has seen acerbities diminish in Europe; Mrs. Gandhi has seen them increase in Asia. The Yugoslav President confronts a heghtening communal dissension at home—a revival of the old jealousies between Croat and Serb—but his country has done well economically. Mrs. Gandhi, in addition to the troubles with Pakistan, has the deep-rooted quarrels of region and language of her complex land to face, as well as the unsolved, basic question of Indian poverty. Non-alignment is no longer the sole key to policy for either—it is but one among many, and will no longer open the most important locks barring access to peace and prosperity.

HERALD TRIBUNE (New York) October 18, 1971

INDIAN ARMY PUT ON ALERT ALONG PAKISTAN BORDER

By William Drummond

New Delhi, Oct. 17:—The Indian Army has been placed on alert as tensions on the Indian-Pakistani border have apparently reached the critical point, it was learned today.

Indian Defence Ministry spokesmen say that Pakistani forces are "gathered in strength" on the frontiers in both East and West Pakistan. "Why should we be shy of acknowledging that we are fully prepared to hit back if Pakistanis are foolish enough to hit us?" said a spokesman.

In Karachi, the official news agency, Associated Press of Pakistan, reported that President Yahya Khan offered to withdraw Pakistani forces along the borders if India withdraws its forces and ceases infiltration and other hostile acts. Mr. Yahya's proposal was made at a meeting with Soviet President Nikolai Podgorny in Persepolis during the 25th centenary anniversary celebrations marking the founding of the Persian Empire, the news agency said.

The agency story, filed last night after Mr. Yahya flew back from Teheran, said: "President Yahya told President Podgorny that if Indian professions of peace were genuine, they should withdraw their armed forces from the borders of Pakistan, cease infiltration and other hostile acts and that Pakistan on its part would also withdraw its armed forces from present defensive positions along the borders.

The President Podgorny also conferred with India's President V. V. Giri in Persepolis on Friday night, but the agency's story gave no further details. There has been no reaction in New Delhi so far to the report of Mr. Yahya's proposal.

The political affairs committee of the Indian cabinet has been meeting daily to review the situation.

Reinforcements At Calcutta

Indian military reinforcements were reportedly being moved up to the Calcutta area to counter any Pakistani move there.

Western sources say that India has brought in about six divisions of troops in the region since last spring. Some were located close to the East Pakistani border, and others were encamped where they could be quickly moved up to the frontier.

Meanwhile, in the Punjab, which faces West Pakistan, authorities in the border area of Amritsar directed all able-bodied males to take up patrol duties at railway tracks, telephone and telegraph lines and other vital installations. Civilian calls to Kashmir have been held up for long periods because of military priorities on phone circuits.

All Indian cabinet Ministers have been asked to cancel their tours abroad. The Minister for foreign trade, I. N. Mishra, was due to leave for Cairo but has postponed the trip indefinitely.

The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, is due to leave next Sunday for an extensive trip abroad that would take her to Europe and the United States in early November, but the fate of her trip is not yet known. She has scheduled one of the rare press conference for Tuesday.

Air Force headquarters in New Delhi had been working a half-day on Wednesdays and Saturdays. They have now been put to full work-days.

The customary night lighting of government's buildings in the capital for the Hindu festival of Divali has been cancelled.

Mrs. Gandhi's explanation for the breach of tradition was that in view of the refugee situation, the national security problem, the floods and drought, there would be no token of rejoicing for Divali.

The border situation has been tense since last March when the West Pakistan Army moved into East Pakistan to crush the Bengali nationalist movement. This led to the flight of about nine million persons into India, where their care and feeding has put a burden on the Indian economy.

The situation has grown increasingly dangerous over the past week. Observers attributed this aggravation to Mr. Yahya's speech last Tuesday over Radio Pakistan.

Although the radio message announced Mr. Yahya's plan to return his country to civilian rule, the Pakistani President spent most of his talk denouncing India and promising military action to defend the sacred soil of "Pakistan".

LOS ANGELES TIMES October 18, 1971
INDIA ISSUES WARNING

New Delhi, Oct. 17, (Reuters) :—India will not withdraw from any Pakistan territory it occupies if war breaks out, Indian Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram said today.

His warning came as Indian and Pakistani troops massed along thousands of miles of their border facing each other at close range at many places. Authorities in the Punjab, bordering West Pakistan, were reported to have tightened civil defence measures.

Mr. Ram, speaking at a political rally near Julludur in north India, 50 miles from the West Pakistan frontier, also declared that Indian forces would not pull back until the East Pakistan crisis was solved. "India will not submit to world pressure in this regard", he said.

Two serious shelling incidents had occurred in the Fazilkar area on the Indo-West Pakistan border, in the past few days with heavy casualties on both sides, according to informed sources.

Sources said that Indian government now tended to think that Pakistan was resigned to the idea of a war to distract attention from the deteriorating situation in East Pakistan.

At a banquet given in honour of President Tito of Yugoslavia tonight Indian President Giri said India's resources had been strained to the maximum by the influx of nine million refugees from East Pakistan.

India had exercised great restraint, but it could not maintain the refugees much longer, he said. It was determined that

they should go home in conditions of safety and dignity, he said.

Mr. Tito replied that India should not have to bear the refugee burden alone, and called for greater international assistance.

If the situation deteriorated, it could jeopardise peace and stability in the entire sub-continent and beyond, Mr. Tito said.

Mr. Tito, who is on a four-day official visit, will discuss the problem with Mrs. Gandhi tomorrow.

THE GLOBE AND MAIL (Toronto) October 20, 1971
EDITORIAL : ASIA AT FLASH-POINT

Relations between India and Pakistan are now at flash-point, and a stray shot anywhere along the border of the two countries could precipitate a disastrous war. Such a war would instantly threaten to involve the two super-powers of Asia, Russia and China. Even if that extreme danger were avoided, the consequences of the war for these principal countries of the Indian subcontinent, and their peoples, would be devastating beyond description. Can nothing be done to stop this tragedy ?

At this stage, there is no point in apportioning blame between the two countries. Their quarrels go back to the beginnings of their independence in the partition of British India ; that these problems persist is not primarily due to more than the normal amount of human folly in Indian and Pakistani leadership. It is obvious, however, that the present crisis is beyond the capacities of both countries to resolve. For India, the immediate problem is the flood of refugees from East Pakistan. Indian authorities estimate the total at nine million. Even Pakistani spokesmen admit to four or five million. In either case their maintenance imposes an unacceptable burden on the Indian economy, costing more than 5 per cent of government expenditure, and much more than all the foreign economic aid India is receiving.

The flow of refugees continues, and virtually none of them will contemplate returning to Pakistan under present conditions. India grows desperate and moves steadily closer—for more general foreign policy reasons as well—to action aimed at dismembering Pakistan and establishing an independent Bangla Desh in the East.

President Yahya Khan of Pakistan has plainly got his Government into an impossible position with his misguided attempt to use military force to suppress the autonomist movement in the country's eastern province. Yet there is some truth in the Pakistani claim that some force was necessary against revolutionary excesses in the first stage of the crisis. Now he is showing signs of looking again for a political solution. It remains doubtful whether the solution can be found that will both restore peace and security in East Pakistan, and preserve some semblance of integrity of the country as a whole. But certainly much more time is needed, and a war at present would ruin every hope.

What is needed now to avert ultimate disaster is some means to take the refugee burden off India's back. This puts the responsibility squarely on the 13-nation World Bank consortium (including Canada) that has been channelling economic aid to India. At a meeting on October 26 in Paris, the consortium will be asked to raise $750 million immediately to help pay for India's refugee programme. More will be needed later. The price is high, but the cost to the world of the likely alternative would be incalculable.

THE WEEKLY BLITZ (Bombay) October 23, 1971
INDIA READY TO SPRASH NAPAKS
By Joga Rao

Even as I write, the sky over Delhi is overcast with heavy clouds, but they also bring, along with the rains, the ominous message of fury and thunder of tanks and artillery poised for action on our borders on the East and the West. Pakistan has been itching for a fight, and the provocations have piled up to a point of no return. But this time it will not be a mere scratch to satisfy the itch it will be a smash-up

of Yahya Khan and his military citadel. The guns may begin to boom in unison with, or even as an echo of, the Divali crackers, which is indicative of how far the tension has mounted and how narrow the distance between the battle-ready forces of the countries is becoming. If only Pakistan had its way the war would have been over by this time, but their plans failed.

The military junta had planned an Israeli-type of attack even as the Congress was in session in Simla. They wanted to blast our Air force bases and planes in the northern region and then roll in their heavy armour followed by the infantry. The Plan even went to the extent of the sounding of the scramble, in the early hours of October 9, and the Pak planes had actually taken off; but our radars had picked up these manoeuvres, and prompt counter-action by the Indian Air Force, coupled with early Intelligence reports, scotched the Pakistani designs. Gathered from reliable sources, this information has, however, neither been confirmed nor denied by official sources.

The Pakistani intentions and preparations for a confrontation with India are clear from the menacing deployment of forces on our Western borders and, also on the frontier between India and Bangla Desh. The heaviest concentration of Pakistani troops is in the Sialkot-Jammu sector. For the first time, Pakistan has put one and a half divisions of armour, consisting of nearly 500 operational Pattons and tanks of Chinese make, in the forefront in this sector. Most of these tanks have been made operational only recently, through the munificence of the Nixon administration. By sending starter-trigger assemblies the Americans have made many of these otherwise idle tanks operational.

Pakistan is planning a frontal attack in this sector with a view to encircling Kashmir and cutting off Jammu from the rest of the country. An indication of this is available from reports of the flight of the civilian population from Sialkot, which is only eight miles from the Jammu border. The reports further say that the border towns of Chapter, Daska, Sambrial, Maharajke, Philora, Chabara and Chavinda up to Naroval to the north-west of Sialkot look deserted. Nearly 50 per cent of Sialkot's population of five lakhs has fled towards Lyallpur and Multan.

The western border is bereft of the civilian population owing to the induction of 12 Pakistani divisions in the whole area. In clear violation of the cease-fire agreement they have massed troops on the border line in Kashmir and have restricted the movement of UN personnel across the international line. Kashmir today is, however, entirely different from what it was in 1965. With the absence of Sheikh Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg, who are banned entry into Kashmir, the Plebiscite Front is completely demoralised. This has considerably dampened the Pakistani designs of infiltration into, and assault through, occupied Kashmir.

The entire Pakistani ruling clique is in panic, and a mad dog when cornered can bite at any time. The hawks in the military junta have been forcing Yahya into a military confrontation. Whatever delay or hesitancy there is, is due entirely to some of the saner elements who know the consequences. What these will be have been categorically and bluntly stated by Jagjivan Ram. His saying that the war would be fought on Pakistani soil is a significant pointer to the mood of the Government and our generals. "We shall go right up to Lahore and Sialkot and shall not come back whatever the consequences". These were the words of the Defence Minister.

The point is that left to herself India does not want a war, but she cannot compromise her dignity and security which is now at stake. The Pakistani rulers fully realise the consequences of a war against India, but they are banking on international intervention as soon as hostilities start. Though Mrs. Gandhi has not spoken so bluntly as Jagjivan Ram, the latter could not have done so without the realisation of the prevailing mood of the Prime Minister. The so-called efforts of intervention by non-aligned countries is nothing but eyewash. This time they are not willing to come to the aid of Pakistan by counselling restraint to India.

What has made the position of the Pak military junta worse is the studied silence of China in giving an assurance of physical intervention in the case of a flare-up. Those has not abated, it has not been stepped up too. The Americans, on the other hand, have been literally dumping vital parts to liven up the rickety Pak Army and sustain the confidence of the Pak regime. There appears to be some strength in the

rumours that the American armament manufacturers and the CIA are out to scuttle Mrs. Gandhi's trip to the U.S. and this can be achieved only through a war between the two countries before she leaves Delhi.

Her presence in the U.S. at this stage will bolster up the anti-Nixon lobby, which may prove suicidal to him in the coming elections. Whether Nixon himself thinks alike is a moot point, but the hawks in the State Department and the armament industry are wary of a tete-a-tete between him and Mrs. Gandhi at this juncture. So, it is more or less this war lobby in the U.S. which is egging on Yahya to take the suicidal plunge into a war with India. The escalation of the activities of the Mukti Bahini in Bangla Desh has landed the Pakistani military junta into a bigger mess than the Americans are in Vietnam. In the early stages of Pakistani genocide in Bangla Desh, authentic information indicatting the reasons behind the brutalities was available here. At first, Yahya and his generals thought the whole thing would be over in 72 hours. Later, owing to the mass defection of the East Pakistan Rifles and Mujahids, they thought the operations would be over in a week, but all their plans went hay-wire.

Now the Mukti Bahini has spread throughout Bangla Desh in a strength of over one lakh, which is certainly a force to reckon with. Chittagong and Chalna ports are half paralysed, and only four trains have been able to run in the last one week. With the Mukti Bahini gradually and inexorably whittling down the Pak Army machinery in Bangla Desh, the killer-generals have no other option but to have a direct military confrontation with India.

Pakistan's four and a half divisions and nearly 100 tanks have now moved to the border from the interior, the maximum concentration being at the 'neck' and the Tripura-Garo Hills sector. Pakistan's biggest thrust will come, however, from the west. They are surer there and have the necessary men and material and the logistics to have a crack at us. They are cornered and they know it. Even Yahya's last-minute bid to implead the Soviet Union to counsel India to exercise restraint has failed. The Soviet Union has bluntly told him to go to hell. And to hell he and his generals will go!

NEWS WEEK October 25, 1971

AVOIDING DISASTER IN SOUTH ASIA

By William P. Bundy

The sheer horror of the Pakistan reign of terror in East Bengal and of the resulting refugee situation in India has been almost obsessive in recent months. It has, perhaps for others besides myself, drowned out real efforts to think through the future there. But such efforts are vital. For the next three months are absolutely critical; they are, in fact, likely to decide whether the horror can be brought under control and whether the even worse horror of outright war between India and Pakistan can be averted.

But critical in what ways? And what do we do—"we" being the nations of the world, but, above all, the U.S.?

The minimum objective is clear enough. A political situation which will stop and, in time, reverse the refugee flow must be one that minimally satisfies the aspirations of the bulk of the people of East Bengal. Whether defined in practical or moral terms, this means at the very least bringing back Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and granting East Pakistan a far higher degree of autonomy than any West Pakistan leader, military or civilian, has yet visualised. Very likely it means an independent Bangladesh in time, but to attempt this at one bite would be to trigger a renewed blood bath. One cannot strike final solutions while passions are as hot as they are now. Time and a reduction of pressures on all three parties—the Pakistan Government, India and the Awami League leaders of East Bengal—are vital elements.

Build Up Of Pressures

The measure of the crisis, however, is that time is now running against all three primary parties, and the pressures, far from being reduced, are building up. In addition to the trial of Mujibur Rahman himself, at least three fuses are lit and running, any one of which could explode in the critical three months. One is the distribution of food within East

Bengal. A second, closely related, is the pace of activity of the India-supported guerrilla movement there, the Mukti Bahini or Liberation Army.

A third fuse, set for perhaps eight to twelve months, is the economic situation in West Pakistan, which is heavily dependent on foreign aid. Beyond all this, and in the longer run perhaps the most ominous threat of all, is the effect of the crisis on Indian economic development. Mrs. Gandhi's triumphant election last March seemed a last chance for India to get on top of its problems. And renewing India's forward progress is critical to the survival of a united India.

Let us take the four problems posed by the Bengal situation in order. Barely adequate food supplies—about half of them contributed by the U.S.—are now being delivered in East Bengal. The question is distribution, and whether politics will come ahead of feeding people, either through the West Pakistan military forces not acting fairly or through interference by the guerrillas. Belatedly perhaps, outside nations have done the right things and now one can only pray that widespread famine can be avoided till the new rice crop in late December.

Guerrilla Threat

The same is true of the guerrilla movement. But India's support of the guerrillas and its resulting passionate rejection of U.N. observers in its refugee camps are understandable parts of a policy under which Mrs. Gandhi has so far courageously resisted pressures for outright war. But there is an element here of the same SCHADENFREUDE—that rejoicing in trouble and exploiting it—that Indians themselves so deeply resented from Pakistan when India was beset by China in 1962 and 1963. Moreover, readers of Neville Maxwell's brilliant book describing Indian border actions before that conflict will be aware that Indian military and quasi-military actions can be both tough and well-concealed, and like other people's, take on a momentum of their own. Mrs. Gandhi may not have anything like full control of the guerrillas, nor indeed do the guerrillas will become progressively more extreme and out of control—and neither can hold back, in part for this very reason.

Thus, the East Bengal situation is in large part beyond the reach of further help from outside. If, but only if, both Pakistani and Indian authorities exert a great deal of restraint, the situation may remain barely tolerable.

The real question is whether outside nations can help both nations to act with restraint. In the case of Pakistan, the United States may have retained some leverage by not blocking small-scale military deliveries arranged before March 25, but the price in Indian-American relations has been fearful, and the impact of American efforts to moderate Pakistani behaviour has not been visible. (By definition, of course, it cannot be).

The gut issue now is whether economic aid to West Pakistan will continue after the first of the year, when pipeline deliveries of commodity aid run out. Here there is a chance for the U.S. to do two things at once—get away from its exposed position of acting alone and transfer the effort to retain outside leverage in Pakistan to the economic rather than the military sphere. The vehicle would be the World Bank consortium to aid Pakistan, and the sign of action a decision by the President to accept the upcoming Congressional ban on military deliveries. But at the same time, the President should override (as the bill permits) the accompanying ban on economic aid—solely to permit necessary commodity aid worked out by the bank. Perhaps the lesser point in all this is leverage on a dug-in-Pakistan Government; the larger one is that two terrible wrongs—the horror in East Bengal and the refugee camps—do not justify a third: economic collapse in West Pakistan.

The accompaniment to such renewed ban on economic aid to West Pakistan would then be a much larger effort than has yet been made to India to overcome the economic effects of the crisis. This year the refugees will cost India much more than its total net foreign aid; the loss must be made up by additional foreign aid on the order of at least $ 500 million, shared internationally. For without this, India, too, cannot act rationally—and may not even for long survive.

In all this I have said nothing of the great-power aspect. For the moment the Soviet Union is exercising restraint, while China may be waiting to pick up the pieces of an extremist Bengal. The history of the fighting between India and China shows how conflict in South Asia rebounds

to the benefit of the one-sided exploiter of tension rather than to those whose simple aim is to preserve India intact and Pakistan in a form that meets the desire of its peoples.

Hard Alternatives

The real stake is people, and more clearly than in most situations, the extraordinary hard, perhaps impossible, job of peace starts with people. Specifically, Congress must pass rapidly the $ 250 million pending supplemental appropriation for refugee help in both India and Pakistan. Then, as it should have been in the first place, the problem must be internationalised on a new and massive scale—first by the World Bank groups for both India and Pakistan and then to include much greater constructive contributions from the Soviet Union. If this is pie in the sky, then the alternative is, almost literally, the collapse of South Asia. With all deliberation, I am inclined to think this could be the worst crisis the world has faced since 1945.

Letters—East Pakistan

The four letters to the editor under the heading "The tragedy of Bengal" (Aug. 23) indicate that some unfortunate misconceptions may have been stimulated by your cover story of August 2.

It is incorrect and unfair to accuse the U.S. of "condoning genocide" or of being "niggardly" in providing humanitarian aid to the victims of the recent events in East Pakistan. The U.S. has, on numerous occasions, expressed its deep concern for the victims of the tragic violence in East Pakistan, and it has taken the lead in response to a call by Secretary-General U Thant for relief to both the refugees in India, and the needy people in East Pakistan. Thus far, the United States has committed about one-quarter of a billion dollars for such humanitarian relief — far more than all other foreign countries put together — and the Administration has asked Congress for another quarter of a billion dollars.

It is incorrect, as one letter implied, that the U.S. has granted 'generous military aid to West Pakistan.' We have not provided any grant aid to Pakistan for any military

equipment since 1965. Nor has the U.S. sold tanks, combat aircraft, artillery or other such equipment to Pakistan since 1965. The only military items that have left the U.S. for Pakistan since the military crackdown in East Pakistan on March 25 have been a limited quantity of spare parts for previously supplied U.S. equipment. The total value of these is less thas $ 4 million. They were all ordered before March 25, and Pakistan paid for all of them in cash. The U.S. has not issued any new licenses since March 25 for any military items destined for Pakistan.

The U.S. shares the concern voiced in one of the letters to you that the situation in Pakistan not to expand into broader conflict. It is our sincere hope that a peaceful political solution acceptable to the people of Pakistan, will be found as soon as possible.

The U.S. is one record on all these counts. We are doing what we can to help feed hungry people and to encourage the healing of deep wounds.

Gilbert F. Austin,
Counsellor for Public Affairs,
American Embassy.

THE FINANCIAL TIMES (London) October 27, 1971
REPRISALS CONTINUE AGAINST UNARMED EAST PAKISTANIS
AP Report From Dacca

In spite of the military regime's persistent denials, the Pakistan army and police continue to take reprisals against unarmed civilians living where the Bengali rebels operate, even within sight of the residence of the new civilian governor in the middle of Dacca. Authoritative sources say the American Government also continues to urge the Pakistani army to halt the attacks in an effort to create a tranquil atmosphere to attract back some of the millions of refugees who have left East Pakistan since March 25, when the army cracked down against the Awami League and its leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, throwing the predominantly Bengali province of 75 million people into civil war.

The sources said American Congressman Peter H.B. Freling Huysen (Rep., New Jersey) was instructed to ask President Yahya Khan about attacks on unarmed persons when he met the military leader in Rawalpindi during his tour of Pakistan earlier this month.

According to the sources, the President denied shootings are taking place and would not concede they might even have happened accidentally. Evidence of reprisals is a burned strip 200 yards square in the Dayaganj residential district astride the railway line connecting Dacca to its river port of Narayanganj, 11 miles away.

According to eye-witnesses, troops, police and volunteer "razakars" burned dozens of homes and shot scores of people a week ago, an hour after two men believed to be members of Mukti Bahini, the Bangla Desh freedom army, gunned down in daylight six soldiers in a patrol. Survivors claimed the reprisals took the lives of at least 50 persons and many others were wounded as forces carrying automatic weapons went from house to house firing into rooms and setting buildings afire.

From the top of one bridge one can count at least 60 homes razed to the ground. Residents said the families have fled from most of the 300 houses in the neighbourhood of shopkeepers, labourers and petty Government officials. "There was no Mukti Bahini when the army came", said one civil servant. "I'm a Government servant and I tell you no person had a weapon". The residents readily spoke to AP about the attack, despite the presence of armed guards at a nearby rail bridge and crossing, but they refused to give their names for publication and one shopkeeper said the people feared agents of the criminal investigation division of the police.

The neighbourhood is about three miles from the residence of the new Bengali civilian governor, Dr. A.M. Malik. The scene of burned houses, twisted corrugated iron roofs and rubble is reminiscent of the appearance of Dacca after the army struck last March 25. The bridge guards said the Mukti Bahini killed at least four soldiers and wounded two others. Apparently the rebels disappeared without being harmed. The incident was one of a series of exchanges of fire

which residents said are occurring almost nightly throughout the capital city. Houses in Dayaganj still had blood splattered walls and floors and rents torn in their bamboo doors and walls by bayonets. The army had no immediate comment but officers have said frequently—troops are ordered only to fire when fired upon.

FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW October 30, 1971
INDIA—PAKISTAN : ARMED TO A POINT
By A. Hariharan

New Delhi : The Armed forces of India and Pakistan are fully geared for war. "From alert to scramble should not take more than two minutes", said India's minister for Defence Production last week. And sabre-rattling goes on all the time. Car strikers proclaiming "Crush India" and "Conquer India" are out in force in Lahore, Karachi and other Pakistan cities. Indian Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram said a new war would be fought on Pakistani soil and India would not only take the cities of Lahore and Sialkot in Punjab but keep them for good.

Ram was obviously referring to the 1965 war when the Indian army marched up to the outskirts of Lahore but did not take the city, following the Tashkent agreement, India had to withdraw from the area and also give up the strategic heights of Kargil and Haji Pir in Kashmir which had been gained at great cost.

There are conflicting versions about the "22-day war" of 1965. Political leaders maintain India did not take Lahore because of the problems involved in feeding the civilian population. However, General Harbaksh Singh who was Commander of the Western Sector at the time, has said the corps commander after having established a bridgehead across the Lechogil canal in Lahore, got cold feet and failed to consolidate his gains. There must be some truth in this for the corps Commander was subsequently fired.

What may prevent war this time is the extremely difficult military situation Pakistan faces. In 1965 both countries refrained from opening a front on the East Pakistan border. Today, with the Bengali population ranged as one man against Pakistan Government there, 80,000 troops in the Province will be bottled up and perhaps annihilated in the first hours of the War.

There are reports Pakistan already has withdrawn one infantry division from the East to strengthen defences in the Western Wing. Can it afford to write off the rest ? Pakistani military Aircraft and Naval Ships will be unable to make use of Ceylon and any attempt to hold East Pakistan in a shooting war is likely to prove helpless.

The military rulers might well see virtue in withdrawing troops from the East and concentrating on the Western Sector with the aim of capturing some Indian territory in Kashmir, Rajasthan or Gujrat, that would be the only way to save face, given the certain loss of East Pakistan.

In terms of military balance, both sides have strengthened their positions since 1965. Pakistan has reportedly taken on loan 75 military Aircraft from Saudi Arabia. It also maintains airforce training missions in various West Asian countries, which, in the event of a war, may be expected to assist Pakistan.

India's policy of achieving self-sufficiency in military hardware gives it a decided advantage over Pakistan. Several new types of arms and ammunition are being manufactured in Indian Ordnance Factories. A major break-through was the Vijayanta tank, considered more manoeuvrable than Centurian which was India's mainstay in 1965. The first Vijayanta rolled out in December 1965 and an informed guess is that between 350 and 400 of these medium tanks equipped with 105 m.m. guns have been put into service.

India makes aircraft and ships as well. The Hindustan Aeronautics is currently making the Jet ground-attack fighter HF-24, the supersonic interceptor MIG-21, the jet fighter Gnat, the Jet-trainer HJT-16, the transport aircraft, HS-748 and Alouette helicopters. The Mazagoan Docks in Bombay produces Leander class frigates.

Meanwhile, Indian citizens have already been hit by the financial burden of the Bengali refugees and of war preparations. Although the finance minister, Y. B. Chavan, had assured parliament and the people that he had no intention of introducing a supplementary Budget this year, on the eve of Mrs. Gandhi's departure on her foreign tour the Government announced more tax measures to raise Rs. 700 million.

New levies are being imposed on railways travel, postal services, bills of exchange. The Government also is imposing an excise duty of two paisa on each copy of newspapers, all new measures taking effect from November 15. They were announced through a Presidential Ordinance — the first time taxes have been collected in this manner. Parliament is to meet by the middle of November for a brief winter session, and as the tax measures are effective only from November 15 the ordinance came as surprise. In addition to the measures proposed by the Centre, the States will have to impose additional duties on certain items falling under their juridisdiction.

The new measures are : 5% surcharge on railway tickets costing one rupee or more ; 5% surcharge on air travel within India (the May budget had imposed a 10% foreign travel tax on the value of tickets) ; a tax of Paisa 5 on all postal articles except postcards; duty of paisa 10 on bills of exchange, bills of lading, promissory notes, insurance policies, letter of credit and proxies; and paisa 2 levy on newspapers and periodicals.

The additional tax measures are being introduced to meet the mounting cost of maintaining the refugees from Bangla Desh and to arrest further deficit financing. An estimate says between April and December 1971 deficit spending would have risen to the figure of Rs. 5,700 million. The budget estimate was Rs. 2,300 million. And unofficial estimates say that if these levies are collected over a period of 12 months, the yield will be much more than Rs. 700 million.

INDIA-PAKISTAN: THE MILITARY BALANCE SHEET

INDIA	PAKISTAN
Population: 5,57,000,000 Voluntary Military Service Total armed forces: 980,000. Estimated G.N.P. 1970: US $49,000 million. Defence Budget 1971-72: 12,420 million rupee ($1656 million) (7.5 rupee=$1)	**Population**: 1,26,300,000 two years selective military service. Total armed forces: 3,92,000. Estimated GNP 1970: U.S. $38,400 million. Defence Budget 1971-72: 3,400 million rupees ($ 714,000,000) (4.76 rupee=$1)
Army: 860,000 1 armoured division 2 independent armoured Brigades 13 infantry Division 10 mountain Division 6 independent Infantry Brigades 2 parachute brigades About 20 AA artillery Units Tanks: 200 Centurian MK5\|2, 250 Sherman, 450 T-54 and T-55, 300 Vijayanta Medium-150PT-76, 100 Amx-13, Light-CT 62, MK 2\|4. **Artillery:** about 3000 pieces, mostly 25 Pounders but including about 250 100-MM and 140 130-MM. Guns: SS-11, Entac ATGW	**Army**: 365,000 (including 25,000 Azad Kashmir troops) 2 armoured Division, 1 independent armoured brigades, 12 infantry division (2 more being raised) 1 Air defence brigade. Tanks: 100 M-47, 100 T-54, 225-T59; 100M-48 Medium: 200 M-24, 75 M-41, 20 PT-76 Light: 300 M-113. **Artillery**: about 900 pieces 25, Pounders, 105 MM. 155 MM howitzers: 200 130-MM Cobra ATGW Helicopters: 20 H-13
Navy: 40,000 1 16000 ton Aircraft carrier 4 submarines (Ex-Soviet F. Class) 2 cruisers 3 destroyers	**Navy**: 10,000 4 Submarines 1 light cruiser (training ship) 2 destroyers 3 destroyer escorters

9 destroyer escorts (including 5 Ex-Soviet Petya class)
1 General purpose frigate
5 anti-submarine frigates
3 anti-aircraft frigates
4 coastal mine sweepers
1 landing ship
2 landing crafts
10 patrol boats (4 less than 100 tons)
9 seaward defence boats (6 less than 100 tons).
The Naval airforce including 35 Sea-Hawks attack aircraft, 12 Alize maritime patrolers, 2 Sea King and 10 Alouette III helicopters, 10 Sea Hawks, 4 Alizes and 2 Alouettes can be carried on the aircraft carrier at any one time.

2 fast frigates
4 patrol boats
8 coastal mine sweepers
2 small patrol boats (less than 100 tons)
2 UH-19 air-sea rescue helicopters.

Airforce: 80,000; 615 combat aircraft
3 light bomber squadrons (Canberra B(1)
5 fighter bomber squadrons (SU-7)
2 fighter bomber squadron (Mystre-IV)
7 Interceptor squadrons (Mig 21)
8 interceptor squadrons (Gnat)
1 reconnaissance squadron (Canberra PR-57).
1 Maritime reconnaissance squadron (L-1049 super constellation (A combat squadron—8 to 25 aircraft)
Transport: include about

Airforce: 17000; 285 combat aircraft
1 light bomber squadron (II-28)
2 light bomber squadrons (B-57B)
2 fighter bomber squadrons (Mirage III E)
8 fighter bomber and interceptor squadrons (F-86)
4 Interceptor squadrons (MIG-19)
1 Interceptor squadron (6F-104A)
1 Reconnaissance squadron (4 RT-33A) and 2 RB-57) (A combat squadron generally=16 aircraft)
Transport: include 8C-130B and 1F-27 Helicopters:

55 C-47, 60 C-119, 20 11-14, 30 AN-12, 25 other, 12 HS-748, and 15 Cariban Helicopters : include about 80 M1-4, 150 Allouette III, 10 Bell-47 and a few M1-8 About 50 SA-2, SAM Complexes, Paramilitary forces : about 1,00,000 in Border Security Forces.	40 Sioux, Huskie and MI-8. Paramilitary force : 2,80,000; 30,000 frontier corps, 250,000 Militia, a new force is being raised : The East Pakistan Civil Armed Force.

SOURCE : The Military Balance 1971-72. Published by the International Institute of Strategic Studies, London.

NEWSWEEK November 8, 1971

A WAR WAITING TO HAPPEN

In their 24 years as independent nations, India and Pakistan have shown a boundless capacity for squabbling with each other. They have argued endlessly over Kashmir and bit of Westland called the Rann of Katch, and six years ago they plunged into a brief but bloody war. "These two countries" remarked one Western diplomat, "have hardly ever been genuinely at peace". And certainly they were not last week. Along 3,000 miles of border, Indian and Pakistani troops massed in menacing formations. Most observers felt that the current travels of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, who is due in the U.S. this week ruled out the likelihood that India would go to war for the moment. But there remained the ominous feeling in both nations that, sooner or later, they would stumble into conflict.

Certainly, announcement, emanating from Pakistan did nothing to cool emotions. Indicating that Indians for unprovoked artillery and mortar attacks that allegedly took the lives of some 150 civilians in East Pakistan. The Govt. of Pakistan (Mohd. Yahya Khan) maintained that its forces had killed nearly 600 'Indian troops and agents' in two days. But observers noted that many of the shells blamed for the

civilian deaths came from 2 inch mortars, short range guns, that could not have been fired from India. And they further pointed out that Pakistan uses the terms "Indian Agents" to refer to the Bengali rebels in East Pakistan who have been fighting the Government since April. In India, the claims were much more modest; New Delhi cited one direct clash with Pakistan attackers and a mortar barrage that killed six civilians. "Personally" said one American observer in India, "I think Pakistan's reports are basically designed to bolster morale at home to stir up a war frenzy."

In much of Pakistan, that seemed unnecessary, Newspapers creamed with headlines such as CONCERTED DELHI BID TO UNDO PAKISTAN AND CRUSH INDIA. Stickers were slapped on Honda motor-cycle seats and even the blinders of horses pulling hansom cabs. "India is playing with fire and she will get burned," a Pakistani Air Force officer told News Week's senior editor Arnaud de Borchgrave. "This time, we will take a major chunk of her territory." But other voices, including that of President Yahya himself, were less than enthusiastic about going to war. And near Pakistan's Western border with India flag waving was rare, for there, nine Pakistani divisions were overwhelmingly outmanned by opposing Indian forces. Last week News Week's Maynard Parker visited India's border forces and found a mood of confidence, almost anticipation.

Parker's Report

Swathed in the smoky sunlight Autumn, the Punjab is magnificent, wild golden country, while peasants cut the last of the wheat, lime and turquoise birds shimmer in the sky like tiny jewels. But the atmosphere is not exclusively one of pastoral tranquillity. For the land bristles with Indian soldiers—turbaned Sikhs, towering Punjabis, dark-skinned, wiry Gurkhas—and it is a land wearing the menacing mask of wartime camouflage. Near Amritsar, the largest Indian town near the border with Pakistan, a stack of hay suddenly starts to move, giving away the fact it is a disguised tank, and a glance behind a mudbarrier reveals a 106 m.m. anti-tank gun and its crew. Soldiers in civilian clothes prowl the border looking for infiltrators, and every bridge worthy of

name is equipped with dynamite charges in case it must be blown up to stop advancing Pakistanis "War is coming for sure," a Sikh sergeant said matter-of-factly. "We just don't know when."

The Indians not only are convinced they will have a war, they are aggressively confident they will win it and cripple Pakistan into the bargain. "This time there will be no stopping us the border," one Major told me. "The Pakistanis might be able to take the offensive in one place, but we would take it in five. And this time we will stay. It would mean the end for them". To carry their message that the people of the Punjab will be safe, the Indian army has ringed important border towns in Steel, massing scores of tanks on their outskirts. And teams of drum-beating soldiers march along country roads and into village squares repeating their belligerent boast: "All the fighting will be done in Pakistan. Not a single shell will fall here."

Communication

Yet, bellicose as the Indians are the border itself is bemusingly peaceful. At the crossing point near Ferozpore, a squad of Pakistan frontier rangers jokes with the Indian guards, and when no officers are looking, the Indians trade the Pakistanis sugar for cigarettes. Border traffic—whether refugees seeking asylum or trucks loaded with pomegranates proceeds as usual, and the Indian customs inspector complains that the young Pakistani immigrants "are only interested in hashish." But the communication between these would-be enemies, is not all furtive or commercial. Major Diljit Singh, Deputy Commander of the Indian Border Security Forces, meets Pakistanis regularly at the border and openly has tea with them. "They tell me, Sahib, we don't want war," Singh said. "Let them fight in East Pakistan. Let us not have war here." That wish, however, may not be granted, "War is inevitable," said a seasoned Western diplomat in New Delhi, "It is only a matter of time."

A Talk With Pakistan's President Yahya Khan

With his country in the midst of one crisis—the guerrilla rebellion in East Pakistan—and on the verge of another—war with India—Pakistan's President Mohammad Yahya Khan

gave an interview last week to Newsweek's senior editor Arnaud de Borchgrave. In their conversation, President Yahya spelled out his position on some of the crucial issues facing his country and India. Below, excerpts from Yahya's remarks :

On The Likelihood Of War

I have no reason to tell you war is not imminent because it is. The Indians are already at war with us, and the only reason there is no general confrontation is that we are not hitting back. We are still exercising maximum restraint despite growing provocation. The Indians are lobbing from 150 to 3,000 artillery and mortar shells across East Pakistan borders every 24 hours.... (The East Pakistani Guerrillas) are destroying bridges, electric pylons, even a food ship the other day. The Indians have set up 23 guerrilla training camps....Civil populations have been evacuated from their border areas, their Defence Minister is threatening us every day....If the Indians escalate with a view to capturing territory and installing a puppet Bangla Desh regime, that will be war.

On India's Military Advantages

How can our army fight and win against an (Indian) army that is five times its size ? It would be military lunacy for me to take them on. But if we are attacked, we will fight back. (The Indian) have a big war machine that is self-sufficient in many respects. If they can lob over 3,000 shells in a day, that means they have plenty of ammunition on hand. It's a luxury to our army cannot afford.

On Chinese Aid To Pakistan

The Chinese will not tolerate an attack on Pakistan. We will get all the weapons and ammunition we need, (every) assistance) short of physical intervention. We get some things free and pay for others. But Chinese terms are so easy 25-year credit, interest free. Last year when I was in Peking I negotiated 200 million worth of economic aid for our Five-Year Plan with no interest.



Casualty of war : Mukti Bahini planted mines to disable the vessel at Chittagong.
National Geographic Magazine, September, '72.

SPECTRUM

The slaughter of students and teachers during the crushing of East Bengal created a deep feeling of outrage. The authorities have been sensitive enough to pick on two small inaccuracies in one report to launch a very expensive exercise in disinformation.

Who pays the Pakistani piper

PAKISTAN : The propaganda war a



Death in Dacca : the Army went in with lists of wanted teachers

June 20. A detailed story on the "pogrom in Pakistan" was run on the front page of the Sunday Times. It claimed that on the night of March 25 and 26 the Pakistan army among other things "killed more than 20 university professors. Of these, Dr Monirruzaman of the physics department was shot dead instead of his namesake in the Bengali department. Mr Monaim of the English department was similarly killed instead of Mr Munir, also of the Bengali department."

July 7. Two Bengali professors, Dr S. Sajjad Husain, Vice Chancellor of Rajshahi University and Dr M. Mohar Ali, reader in History at Dacca University wrote to The Times. They said they were "surprised to discover that many people in Great Britain have the impression that a large number of Bengali intellectuals, including university teachers, were deliberately killed by the Pakistan army on March 25-26 and subsequently." Referring specifically to The Sunday Times report, the two professors said "we had spoken to Mr Monaim ourselves on June 12 on the eve of our departure for London and that he was very much alive."

August 3. A full page advertisement, claiming to be sponsored by the Pakistan Solidarity Front of Barking, appeared in The Times under the caption HANDS OFF PAKISTAN! It referred to the letter from Dr Husain and Mr Ali and to an earlier joint statement issued on May 15, 1971, by 53 professors, authors and artists of East Pakistan which mentioned that "some of us were very intrigued to find ourselves as listed among those shot and killed

"What is the truth?

The Sunday Times story of June 20 did contain two inaccuracies. In reporting Dr Monirruzaman's death, we incorrectly described him as belonging to the physics department." The dead professor and his death is not denied by Dr Husain or Dr Ali—belonged to the department of statistics.

Mr Monaim was not killed. He was shot and wounded. Bengali scholars and politicians and an American teacher who visited Dacca in the third week of July and met Mr Monaim confirmed he had a shoulder wound.

Dr Husain and Dr Ali also said in their letter that "there is no massacre of intellectuals" and that "no teacher was killed at Rajshahi or Chittagong universities on March 25 or later." The letter continued: "The number of teachers at Dacca University who are known to have lost their lives in the fighting around Iqbal and Jagannath Halls on March 25-26 is nine. This is certainly most unfortunate and regrettable. But these colleagues of ours would not have died if armed members of the Awami League volunteer corps had not used the building in which they lived and the neighbourhood as a base for their operations against the army."

I learned at first hand during a visit to Dacca in the middle of April that the nine "unfortunate" colleagues did not die by accident during the fighting around the Iqbal and Jagannath Halls.

Neither Iqbal Hall nor Jagannath Hall, despite the heavy firing were "used by armed members of the Awami League volunteer corps," as Dr Husain and Dr Ali allege. Army officers smiled when I questioned them about such reports. The Iqbal Hall *chowkidar* (watchman) and neighbours told me that the students had not fired back at the army. "How could they?" he said. "They had no guns." The only evidence of "weapons" in the hostel were dummy rifles used on parade by the University Officers Training Corps.

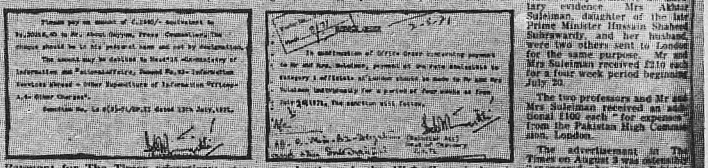
It is significant that both Dr Husain and Dr Ali were part of the Pakistan Government's disinformation effort. The professors were sent out to London towards the end of June in response to the High Commissioner's request for "prominent Bengalis" to "speak on behalf of the Government." They were provided with hotel accommodation, and an allowance of £10 a day—perquisites "available to Category I officials." This has been substantiated by available documentary evidence. Mrs Akhtar Sulaiman, daughter of the late Prime Minister Hussain Shaheed Suhrwardy, and her husband, were two others sent to London for the same purpose. Mr and Mrs Sulaiman received £210 each for a four week period beginning July 20.

The two professors and Mr and Mrs Sulaiman received an additional £100 each "for expenses" from the Pakistan High Commission, London.

The advertisement in The Times on August 3 was ostensibly "sponsored by the Pakistan Solidarity Front." In fact, it was paid for by a special subvention made through Mr Qayyum, Press Counsellor of the Pakistan High Commission, London. The sum of £2,640 was made available to him on July 30. This statement from Demand No. 92—Information—B/25-71/EP II dated 13 July, 1971, part of which is reproduced at left. This was then handed over in cash by a representative of the Solidarity Front.

The head of government is clearly behind "independent" visits and sponsorship of meetings.

Anthony Mascarenhas



Payment for The Times advertisement was made through the High Commission in London (left) and passed on to a "voluntary" body. Visiting academics and speakers were treated and paid as officials (right)



Bengalis in Jessore cheer Indian Army's arrival. Time : 20-12-71.



Mass grave unearthed at Rokeya Hall—a women's dormitory of Dacca University.
Courtesy : Bangladesh Observer.



Pakistan's Yahya with Chinese officials.
Newsweek : 6-12-71.

India's Gandhi with Russian officers.
Newsweek : 6-12-71.



On Negotiations

I don't want to escalate. I'm doing my best to defuse the situation. I have repeatedly accepted U Thant's proposals for International Observers to observe any thing they wish, including how we are resettling refugees who come back (to East Pakistan) I cannot accept the figures that there are 9 million East Pakistani—even it will not be 4 million after impartial observers, through counting. Whatever, the figure, I will accept anyone who left after March as a Pakistani national and take him back. This can only be controlled by the United Nations.

On The Future Of Bangla Desh

No one ever treated the Bengalis fairly. We too have made mistake and by "we" I also mean East Pakistanis who have been our presidents and premiers since independence. East Pakistan was down and out, and we did not pay sufficient attention to its development. We are now trying to make up for last time. The new constitution will be promulgated on December 20. They are 1,000 miles away so it is only normal that they enjoy maximum autonomy and handle their own affairs. That means every thing except defence, foreign affairs and taxation.

On Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

Many people might not believe me, but I think if he (Mujib, the Bengali leader currently on trial for treason) went back (to East Pakistan) he would be killed by his own people who hold him responsible for all the suffering. In any case, it is an academic question. He had been discussing internal autonomy with me for two years and went back on his word. He organised and led an armed rebellion against the state. There was no alternative but to suppress the rebellion. Any other government would have done the same thing. How can I now call that man back and negotiate with him? He is charged with waging war against the state and subverting the loyalty of the army. He is being defended by A.K. Brohi who is the best and most respected lawyer in the country. Brohi would not have taken the case if he thought there was going to be any hanky-panky in the military court.

I did not shoot Mujib first and try him later as some government are prone to do....I cannot release him on a whim. It's one hell of a responsibility. But if the nation demands his release, I will do it.

On An Independent Bangla Desh

The worst losers will be the Indians themselves. East Bengal and Assam will soon join in, and that will be the beginning of the break up of the Indian Union itself. I hope to God this woman (Mrs. Gandhi) understands.

AFP REPORT RELEASED FROM PEKING BUT NOT TRANSMITTED FROM PARIS

AFP-165

PAKISTANI-CHINESE I PEKING November 15, 1971

PAKISTANI-CHINESE I

By Jean Leclere du Sablon

Peking, November 15, 1971, (AFP) : China has clearly and insistently warned Pakistan that it does not want war to break out in the Indian sub-continent, an informed source disclosed here today.

The source said Chinese concern over the risk of Indo-Pak war was conveyed repeatedly to Pakistan President Yahya's envoy Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the three Pakistani army chiefs during talks they had here a week ago with premier Chou En-lai and other Chinese leaders.

The Chinese were particularly insistent on the necessity of avoiding a war with India in their talks with the three Pakistani commanders, the source said.

It was during Pakistani's three day stay in Peking that acting foreign minister Chi Peng Phei denounced what he called the 'gross Indian interference' in Pakistani internal affairs but also emphasised that difference between the states

must be settled through mutual consultations and not through the use of force.

The source contrasted Chinese prudence on the Indo-Pak conflict as no communique was issued for Bhutto's visit with the publicity given to the Soviet commitment in India.

Last week's statement on India was the first made by China's official news agency Hsinhua source; the denunciation of Indian expansionism seven months ago.

Diplomatic sources here listed 4 reasons for China's discreet change on the Indo-Pakistan problems :

1) China wants to demonstrate that its recent entry into the United Nations Organisation may help to make the world body more efficient.

2) The Chou En-lai's diplomacy is to keep South-East Asia free from power wrangling by two super-powers specially the Soviet Union.

3) Peking would be reluctant to make moves jeopardising its budding entente with India. Premiers Chou and Indira have just exchanged telegrams on the occasion of China's entry into the U.N. Mrs. Gandhi hoped for Chinese co-operation in the World body and Mr. Chou said friendship between the Indian and Chinese people is developing day by day. China welcomed Indian table-tennis team to the recent Afro-Asian Table Tennis Tournament in Peking and invited 2 Indian newsmen to a visit to the country for the first time in 15 years.

4) The independent Bangladesh would certainly conform neither with China's interest nor with its ideologies.

It would surely weaken China's Pakistani ally and upset the balance on the Indian sub-continent.

Chi Peng Phei's speech delivered during Mr. Bhutto's visit here castigated East Pakistan's internal secessionists and said the East Pakistan problem must be settled by the Pakistani people themselves in a reasonable way.

This speech has not carried the conviction that China would support new authoritarian steps by the central Pakistan government to solve the East Bengal problem.

NEWSWEEK November 15, 1971
THE SUB-CONTINENT:
A LOSING BATTLE

State occasions are usually made up of platitudes and pleasantries. And when President Nixon greeted India's Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, on the south lawn of the White House last week, he tried to follow the formula, even to the point of expounding on Washington's balmy weather. But Mrs. Gandhi was having none of it. Alluding to Pakistan's repression of its Bengali minority — and the resultant flood of 9 million refugees into India — she told Mr. Nixon that her country was facing "a man-made tragedy of vast proportions." And with India and Pakistan poised on the edge of war, she added, "I have come here looking for a deeper understanding of the situation in our part of the world." But Mrs. Gandhi's search apparently proved fruitless. For the President and the Prime Minister failed to agree on a way to end the crisis between India and Pakistan — or even how to repair the strained relations between Washington and New Delhi.

From the beginning, Mrs. Gandhi hoped to persuade Mr. Nixon to put pressure on Pakistan to stop its campaign to crush the Bengali independence movement. As she has done in the past, she argued that only America—which still sends arms to Pakistan and has never openly censured Pakistan for its policy toward the Bengalis — has enough influence on the Islamabad government to bring an end to the crisis. But the American response to Mrs. Gandhi, as White House spokesman Ronald Ziegler described it, "didn't break much new ground." And the present U.S. policy of urging India to pull back its troops from the Pakistani borders and to accept international mediation in the dispute cut little ice with Mrs. Gandhi. "Our people cannot understand," she said in a blunt toast at a White House dinner, "how it is that we who are the victims should be equated with those whose action caused the tragedy."

It was, in all, a bitter week for the Indian leader. For even as her mission to America ran aground on the rocks of

indifference, the death toll in her homeland rose tragically in the aftermath of a massive cyclone and tidal wave. More than 10,000 people died when the winds and water mauled the low-lying coastline of the Bay of Bengal in the state of Orissa. And officials feared that the destruction of rice crops and the poisoning of river water by dead bodies would drive the toll even higher.

An Unwinnable War

The tragedy along the Bay of Bengal could hardly have come at a worse time for India. For its fragile economy is now near collapse as a result of the burden of caring for the Pakistani refugees. And it faces the threat of a two-front war with an increasingly restless Pakistani Army. Although the majority of India's troops are massed in the west, the outbreak of conflict is more likely to begin in the east. To assess the military situation in that sector, Newsweek's Senior Editor Arnaud de Borchgrave flew last week to East Pakistan and cabled the following report:

"Go anywhere you want, see for yourself," Pakistan's President Mohammed Yahya Khan told me. And there was no better place to see how close India and Pakistan might be to war than the border area near Comilla in East Pakistan. I boarded a two-car military supply train headed for Pakistani headquarters. And although there was the danger of Indian artillery fire, an army colonel said reassuring, "They're lousy shots." Huddled behind a protective brick wall inside what once was the second-class compartment, I nervously made the trip. We were rattling along, running parallel to the border when the train was flagged down; recoilless rifles were peppering the tracks in front of us. There was nothing to do but walk to the nearest command post. A tall Punjabi sergeant fingered his red beard and said, "It's just a mile up the track."

That one mile turned out to be seven. Mortar shells constantly splashed into the muddy paddy fields alongside the tracks and rifle bullets slammed into the steep railroad embankment. But the paddy water absorbed the mortar fragments, the Indian riflemen were indeed "lousy shots," and three hours later I safely reached the headquarters of Delta Company of the 30th Punjabi Battalion. Bullets kept thud-

ding into the trunks of palm and date trees and ripping through the foliage of the banana groves. The company commander's batman had just been killed while he was saying evening prayers. And the 150 men assigned to defend 9 miles of frontier had been suffering through war's repetitious frustration: continual artillery barrages from the Indians, continual harassment from the Mukti Bahini guerrillas (the Bengali rebels fighting for an autonomous East Pakistan).

However, dangerous or nerve-racking India's artillery barrages may be to the frontline soldiers, the attacks did not seem to bother the Pakistani commanders. "We can take it," Brig. M. H. Atif remarked casually. "We are not afraid. Let the Indians waste a lot of ammo; attrition will hurt them more than it will hurt us." The tall, 43 year old Punjabi officer, a field-hockey star on four Pakistani Olympic teams, was fresh off the tennis court and his attention was focused not so much on the border troubles as on sports. Pakistan's hockey team had just won the world championship (India finished third) and Atif found significance in the event. "Your victory over India," he cabled the hockey team, "is morale-raising and considered a good omen out here. Proud of you." And he told me, "India has five times as many hockey players as Pakistan and we still beat them." His point was inescapable: Pakistan, even though outnumbered militarily 5 to 1, would defeat India in a war as it did in a hockey tournament.

Such thinking lays bare the fact that the Pakistani Army has only the dimmest notion of guerrilla warfare. For while the soldiers were clustered on the border, the Mukti Bahini seemed to have the run of East Pakistan. The government has attempted to combat the insurgents with "razakars," local teen-age hoodlums raised to the status of a paramilitary force. But the razakars harm the government cause more than they help it. "They think they are God because they have guns," one villager told me. They tell the people they have blanket power from the Army "to make life hell" for the rebels, but they are as apt to terrorise a man who refuses to give them food or a girl who resists their lewd advances. Several times my car was stopped by two or three razakars at makeshift bridges — once with the barrel of a gun poking through the window. I was asked to pay a "toll." Such tactics, when applied against the populace, have turned most

Bengalis into Mukti Bahini supporters: when I asked people whether they wanted to remain part of Pakistan or create a new state of Bangla Desh, almost all answered, "Bangla Desh."

Even some unlikely people expressed hope for an autonomous Bangla Desh. At a ferry crossing on the outskirts of the capital city of Dacca, I asked a young man who worked for the government what he thought would be best for the people. "I am not allowed to say," he replied at first. But reassured that he would not be named, he mumbled in a low voice, "Bangla Desh should be independent, of course. All of us feel that way." And seemingly thousands do. For while green and white Pakistani flags flutter over even the most wretched huts, and peasants everywhere make a point of wearing sarongs and shirts in the national colours, several people whispered to me that they did so only to deceive the razakars into thinking they favoured the government.

Like the Americans in South Vietnam, the Pakistani command seems dangerously unaware of the real sentiments and loyalties of the population. The official insistence that all was going well was reflected in the remarks of Gen. A. A. K. Niazi, the eastern sector commander. The rebels were no serious problem — "We have the razakars to take care of them." The shelling from India's troops massed just across the border was not a great threat — "My men are not worried; as long as they are in their bunkers, they can relax, even play cards." And as for the report that Mukti Bahini leaders were calling on Bengalis to take their fight into the streets of Dacca, Niazi insisted that he would relish such a move. "I wish they would do it," he told me, "My tanks are only a few miles from the city." Then, referring to the repression of the Bengalis' revolt last March, he added, "They saw then what we can do — and we will do it again if need be."

What the general does not seem to appreciate is the steady deterioration of internal security and the degree of organisation of the Mukti Bahini. By last week, the government had lost control of 25 per cent of the police stations in East Pakistan. A number of district commissioners are tacitly co-operating with the guerrillas and much of the area north of Dacca itself is controlled outright by the Mukti Bahini. I personally was contacted by a Mukti Bahini representative

within 30 minutes of checking into my hotel in Dacca — despite tight police security. The rebels have established a disciplined network carefully organised into teams — some assigned to collect taxes and organise bank robberies, others designated as saboteurs, still others coldly earmarked to be assassins.

The harsh truth about Bengali resistance are being concealed not only from the area's civil governor, A. M. Malik, but from President Yahya himself. They are both convinced that the Pakistani Army is effectively and honourably fighting the guerrillas. Yet a highly knowledgeable foreign observer accuses the soldiers of atrocities. Ostensibly in pursuit of a band of rebels, army troops recently surrounded the village of Demora (where the Mukti Bahini had never been), raped all the women between 12 and 35 and shot all the men older than 12. Only days later, Pakistani gunboats swept up the river at Chalna, sinking fishing boats and shooting the fishermen as they swam for safety. All this accomplishes to make resistance in East Pakistan more extreme, more dedicated than ever. The majority of the people are already anxious to break away from Pakistan, while army commanders — despite their public bravado — are beginning to realise that they are trapped in an unwinnable guerrilla war.

A Talk With India's Prime Minister Gandhi

Two week ago, Newsweek's Arnaud de Borchgrave interviewed Pakistan's President Mohammed Yahya Khan. Last week, with Pakistan and India still teetering on the verge of war, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi gave an exclusive interview to Newsweek's Foreign Editor Edward Klein. Below, excerpt :

On War With Pakistan

For a long time, even though there were very provocative and threatening actions and speeches by the President of Pakistan, India did not do anything. Now, when we feel that we are being threatened, we simply can't leave our border undefended. I don't know any country in the world that

would say, "We will leave our border undefended"....What should we do when this is happening on our border? Do we just sit quietly and say, "Do whatever you like, even if its consequences to us are so great"?....This I would say: by and large the Indian people don't want war. We do have vocal elements who have been wanting war, certain extremist parties who have been wanting war. But we don't have among the people an anti-Pakistan movement as Pakistan has a hate-India movement....I sincerely hope that there will not be a war and I am doing everything possible to keep it from happening....The threat of war is considerably less since we moved our troops to the border of West Pakistan. But, of course, as the situation heats up in the east, that is where the threat is. We feel every day the danger to eastern India is increasing.

On Supporting The Bengalis

Only when the refugees started coming....can you say that India had a hand in the Pakistan crisis. Only after all the Pakistan Army terror can you say, "Well, may be some of the guerrillas do come over from India"....Some of the training may be taking place on our side, but certainly not all of it. Even now the guerrillas are not dependent on India. As you know, the majority of the guerrillas are the paramilitary forces of East Bengal....And they're the ones who are training new people....What the Bengalis consider to be the spirit of their people has been very deeply wounded. And while that spirit is there, the Pakistani Army will have to kill all the 75 million people in East Bengal before they can have control over them....India can only prevent such a massacre in small indirect ways. And I have absolutely no hesitation in saying that if I were placed in a situation like the Bengalis, I certainly would fight. After all, we did fight the British and we have encouraged independence struggles all over the world.

On The Bengali Refugees

Taking care of the refugees means cutting a lot of our programs, it means a certain austerity in living, cutting government spending and reorienting various schemes and

programs....It is indeed a very, very heavy burden. I don't think it will cripple our economy, we won't go under with it....But the major danger is not this burden, which is heavy enough. It is the social and political tensions which are growing out of this problem. And, we feel that there is even a very real threat to our security.

On The Breakup Of Pakistan

I don't think any country in its right mind would want its neighbour to disintegrate. We have enough problems of our own without having a weak neighbour; it's not a healthy situation.. (But) it is our assessment that East Bengal cannot remain united with Pakistan ever again in the same way it has been.

On Soviet Aid To India

I've never asked for help at any age. Not even as a small child did I ask any person, "Will you do this for me or will you give me this". I have not asked the Soviet Union for help. I have explained to them as I have to other countries what the situation is. Now, it is up to the Soviet Union—and other countries—to decide; is the stability of India important to our region or not? We certainly welcome help from whatever quarter it will come. We welcome support, we welcome sympathy. But I have always stood on my own two feet and I want India always to stand on its feet. We don't want to be dependent on any country in the world.

On Yahya Khan

He is one man who could not get elected in his own country if there were a fair election. I would say he would not even get elected in his province if there were a fair election....Asked to reply to a statement by President Yahya in last week's Newsweek interview, Mrs. Gandhi noted that Yahya had referred to her as "that woman." That woman! I'm not concerned with the remark but it shows the mentality of the person. I mean, how well has he judged his own

capacity to deal with East Pakistan? If he can't judge a very small section of what was his own country, what weight has his judgment on India ? What does he know about it? It's a world which is quite outside his ken.

NEWSWEEK November 22, 1971
INDIA : PAKISTAN—PEACE OR WAR ?

The Washington consensus on whether the border fighting between India and Pakistan will explode into war puts the odds at "better than 50-50" for all-out conflict.

Even the calendar looks ominous. The monsoons have ended and snow (which could keep Pakistan's Chinese allies from lending a hand) starts in mid-December. The timetable, U.S. experts say, is right for fighting in West Pakistan where most of the Pakistani Army is based.

The military outlook favours India, even if all of Delhi's claims do not prove out. The dramatic call-up of 700,000 reserves last week, for instance, will probably produce only 50,000 combat-ready men. Nonetheless, India's army outnumbers Pakistan's by 3 to 1, and its air force—a failure in the 1965 fighting—is both larger and far better equipped. The Indian fly Soviet attack bombers and MIG-21s; Pakistan has obsolete U.S. F-86 jets and Chinese-built MIG-19s. Moreover Pakistan has only enough supplies for a month's fighting.

What hope there is rests on last-minute diplomatic moves. President Yahya told the U.S. he would pull back his forces—unilaterally—and meet with the outlawed Bengali government and its political arm, the Awami League. India, however, insists it will not retreat until the Pakistan civil war ends, with the refugee flood stopped, jailed Bengali leader Mujib freed and East Pakistan given some form of autonomy.

U.S. NEWS AND WORLD PRESS
THE 24th NOVEMBER, 1971

N.Y. Times Malcolm M. Browne reports from Karachi on a Pakistani charge Monday night that India had launched an all-out military offensive against her without declaration of war. A Pakistani radio report said there was heavy fighting all along East Pakistan's borders with India and admitted that Indian forces had "made some dents in our territory," Browne said.

Times' Sydney H. Schanberg reports from Calcutta: "A major offensive by Bengali insurgents is apparently under way against the Pakistani army on the western side of East Pakistan, according to reports reaching Calcutta. Capture of the city of Jessore seems to be a key initial objective, and heavy fighting was reported not far from the city, which is about 20 miles inside East Pakistan and 85 miles southwest of the regional capital, Dacca.

Baltimore Sun's John E. Woodruff reports from Calcutta that "Indian-supported Bengali guerrillas" were moving slowing forward in what appeared to be their first large-unit drive against the Pak army since it ousted the guerrillas from East Pakistani cities last spring. Woodruff says, "only sketchy reports are available, due to India's thorough control of the movements of foreign nationals in the affected border areas."

A Times special from the United Nations quotes a Pakistani delegation spokesman charging that 12 Indian divisions were involved in a four-pronged attack on Pakistani forces Monday night. The spokesman was quoted saying that two of the Indian divisions involved were formerly deployed on the Indian-Chinese border and two others were comprised of mountain troops from Nagaland. Indian infantry was being supported by a tank regiment, and 38 battalions of Indian border security forces were also involved in the operation, said the spokesman who reported his information came by telephone from Islamabad.

Washington Post's Stanley Karnow predicts difficult times ahead for the United States, the Soviet Union and Communist

China in the wake of the deteriorating situation in South Asia. Each of them, he says, "is anxious to avert a full-scale war in the region. Yet none appears to have the authority or influence to stem a trend that currently seems to be moving through a momentum of its own."

Washington Star's Henry Bradsher finds evidence that political, diplomatic, and economic pressures are leading the Pakistani leaders to re-examine their position and think in terms of giving up East Pakistan. This is no easy problem Mr. Bradsher observes, but speed in solving it is essential because of the Indians impatience, as shown by their step-up of military pressure.

Says Bradsher: "President A.M. Yahya Khan has to move slowly in any change of policy in order to convince his army of the need for change.

"Yahya Khan is aware of the economic and diplomatic pressures. But his army officers see only the military situation, and it is more likely to make them defiant than compressing. Any potential compromise worked out by Yahya Khan could be endangered by their defiance, with his own position at risk".

Columnist Max Lerner whose views appear in a number of newspaper does not consider President Yahya's position hopeless.

Lerner says: "If he were to free the Awami leader, Sheikh Mujibur, and if Mujibur were to recall the refugees from India under a promise of safety from the Government, there might be a new start. Even that may be too late, since the leadership may, by now, have moved beyond Mujibur, and may be more bitter and extremist, but the effort would be worth making. (Nothing short of it can work, because the Indian Government is compelled by the religious-political intensity of its own people to support the refugee and their cause).

Richard Egan of the National Observer (Washington) points out that Russia and China are urging caution to their allies, but he envisions one dread possibility: "Both currently are pursuing international policies that could be damaged by the involvement in a conflict between India and Pakistan. The Russians are waging a diplomatic "peace offensive." And the Chinese are expanding their diplomatic

contacts with the United States and other nations they have been quarrelling with.

"Nevertheless.....the possibility of Chinese intervention might arise if Pakistan's existence as an independent state is threatened and any such move by China raises the likelihood of Russia stepping in on India's side.

U.S. NEWS AND WORLD PRESS THE 25th NOVEMBER, 1971

Washington Post's Carroll Kilpatrick, reporting from San Clemente said that the White House is considering the possibility of taking the India-Pakistan issue to the Security Council, the issue is a delicate one for President Nixon. He wrote that if the issue is taken to the Council it could result acrimonious debate among the great powers without having any practical impact on India and Pakistan. Kilpatrick continued: "If allowed to..however, there is an adverse effect on great-power relationships, since all are deeply interested in the shifting power balance in South Asia, with **China** supporting Pakistan and the Soviet Union supporting India. An all-out war in the area could even force the President to cancel his plans to visit Peking and Moscow next year."

N.Y. Times special from San Clemente said Western influence in India and Pakistan has been declining while Russia has strengthened its ties with India and the Chinese their support for Pakistan. The story said "accordingly it is thought that a concerted effort in the Security Council to bring the India - Pakistan dispute under control might have more chance of success than diplomatic initiatives undertaken by the United States alone."

Washington Post's Anthony Astrachan at the United Nations said "some third world ambassadors said Pakistan did not want Council action because impartial investigation would reveal the extent to which Pakistan had exaggerated the scale of the fighting, if not the degree of Indian involvement..... Third world ambassadors say India expects the ultimate outcome to suit its strategic aims of weakening Pakistan if the United Nations does not intervene."

N.Y. Times' Henry Tanner at the United Nations said Pakistan was still reluctant to call for a Council meeting because she is uncertain whether she would get the necessary support from the Big Powers. Tanner said UN officials said it would be the "height of irresponsibility" for Secretary-General Thant to call for a meeting knowing that the principal members of the Council were deadlocked on the issue. Tanner said "Pakistan, it is reported, does not want to go into the Council if all she can obtain is a resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire. This would freeze the present military positions and make it impossible for the Pakistani army to press its fight against the guerrilla forces."

N.Y. Times' Benjamin Welles in Washington said President Nixon reportedly was contemplating a personal appeal to President Yahya to release Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from prison and to seek, by personal negotiations, a peaceful solution to the crisis in East Pakistan. Welles said "the report that Mr. Nixon was weighing a personal appeal to President Yahya Khan—which came from highly placed sources—could not immediately be confirmed. A White House spokesman declined to comment and senior State Department officials said that they knew of no such plan in the immediate future."

Washington Post's Robert Trautman, reporting on Secretary Roger's Wednesday meeting in Washington with Indian and Pakistani diplomats, said "the State Department maintained silence on the direction U.S. diplomatic moves were taking, although acknowledging that the United States was in touch with the Soviet Union."

Baltimore Sun's Charles W. Corddry also reporting on the Rogers meeting, said "authoritative sources here accept that there is Indian support for the Mukti Bahini, the East Pakistani independence fighters operating from Indian territory.... The degree of the operating support and the extent of the fighting are both unclear, officials still were saying yesterday (Wednesday)."

Baltimore Sun's John E. Woodruff in New Delhi reported Western diplomatic sources said Indian forces are understood to be withdrawing to Indian territory after making relatively brief incursions, sometimes lasting only hours. He continued: "most diplomats here are apparently interpreting India's activities to date as a step-up within an over all Indian strategy

of applying military pressure at levels calculated to be too low to require any all-out war by Pakistan. These are described as an all-out Indian initiated war on Pakistan and a continuation of the Pakistani army's terror in East Bengal.

N.Y. Times James P. Sterba in Dacca reported a senior Pakistani military commander as saying there were only scattered shelling and harassing attacks Thursday along the East Pakistani border.

N.Y. Times Sydney H. Schanberg in Calcutta, reporting Indian sources feel that Pakistani troops are being hurt so badly that President Yahya will have to react soon with a declaration of war, wrote: ".... These sources do not now think his reaction will be a meek withdrawal from East Pakistan....."

Some foreign diplomats seem to share the Indian sources' view that Pakistan may opt for full-scale war as the only face-saving way out of its apparently desperate situation....Some observers think that India may be trying to provoke Pakistan into declaring war as a way to solve the Indian predicament."

N.Y. Times' Max Frankel, on a world trip, wrote from New Delhi: "Influential Indian officials now acknowledge that they are resolved to apply as much military pressure as necessary short of all-out war to help wrest East Bengal from the control of embattled Pakistani forces there. The effort may take weeks or even a few months, these officials say, but they are confident that it has gained them the advantage in the eight-month-old duel over the eastern portion of Pakistan. They think the co-ordinated challenge by their army and East Bengal insurgents has left Pakistan's military leaders with only a bitter choice between a politically humiliating or militarily devastating path to partition of their country."

Washington Post in a story compiled from news despatches and the N.Y. Times with an Associated Press item from Rawalpindi reported, informed sources said, that the Soviet Union delivered a notice to President Yahya demanding that Pakistan come to political terms with the Bengali insurgents.

N.Y. Times carried an A.P. report from Belgrade, based on a Tanjug despatch from Peking, quoting Premier Chou is expressing concern over "military provocation" by India

against Pakistan. The A.P. said that Peking's press, while reporting an "invasion" by India, has shown a notable restraint in the last few days.

N.Y. Times Thursday carried a brief "background of the conflict," a factual summary under the headings "historical," "the conflicts," and "the present crisis".

Christian Science Monitor's David Winder at the U.N. wrote it is now readily apparent that the East Pakistani guerrillas are able to hamper internal communications and curtail the U.N. relief programme within East Pakistan. He concluded: "There is a general consensus that the only permanent solution to the massive refugee problem would be a political settlement in East Pakistan that would encourage refugees to return to situation of normalcy. Thus far officials estimate that only a paltry 200,000 refugees have returned."

Christian Science Monitor's Henry S. Hayward in Hong Kong wrote that several points are now clear amid conflicting reports on the India-Pakistan undeclared war: "One point is that the Indians have indeed been fighting Pakistanis. This despite official Indian protestations that, with the exception of one border skirmish, only the rebel East Pakistani Mukti Bahini have been involved. Another clear fact is that both sides have exaggerated the magnitude of attacks already supposedly launched against them. And both sides have been less than candid about their own offensive moves."

Wall Street Journal's Peter R. Kann in Dacca wrote that a full-scale war this year or next between India and Pakistan would be longer and bloodier than the 1965 one. "Analysts say both countries are considerably stronger than they were in 1965; India is believed less amenable to any international calls for a cease-fire; a war now would see heavy fighting on both the eastern and the western fronts rather than only in the West as in 1965, and bitter civil war raging in East Pakistan adds a bloody chapter.

New Dimension

Kann said the real roots of the current crisis are sunk deep in the poverty, misery and frustrations, the prejudices and passions not only of East Pakistan but also of the entire sub-continent.

Washington Post's Lee Lescaze in Akhaura, East Pakistan, noted official Pakistani claims that the two nations were already unofficially at war. Well informed sources in Dacca said yesterday (Nov. 24) that the situation was not as serious as the initial reaction indicated. Lescaze reported that one inquirer was told by a senior Pakistani official that "it is not yet time to evacuate Dacca."

Baltimore Sun carried an Associated Press story from Washington that widespread famine in East Pakistan has been averted at least temporarily by emergency international aid and an expected heavy rice harvest. The A.P. said A.I.D. officials, in reporting this, cautioned that widespread fighting could quickly worsen the food situation again.

TIME Magazine, November 29, 1971

INDIA NOT IF, BUT WHEN

When Prime Minister Indira Gandhi returned home from her three-week tour of Western nations last week, one of the first things she did was to go before her hawkish Parliament and plead for patience toward her handling of the crisis with Pakistan. The urgent need for a solution was all too apparent. Officials in New Delhi said that the biggest frontier battle yet between Indians and Pakistanis occurred when 1,800 Pakistani regulars crossed the border into West Bengal. Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram rose in Parliament to say that if India was attacked, it would "carry the war into Pakistan." Indians across the country, meanwhile, were placing bets on when—not if—war with Pakistan would take place.

Nonetheless, Mrs. Gandhi was evidently hopeful that the civil war between West and East Pakistan would be resolved. "Solutions have been found even to seemingly insoluble problems," she said. She added that India would take no independent action until Western leaders have had a chance to defuse the crisis. The hope: that they would pressure Pakistan President Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan's military regime into finding a political solution acceptable to the East Pakistanis.

Though Indira's Western trip is credited with bringing in several sizable donations from abroad for Bengali refugee relief, India is still faced with a financial burden that is expected to reach $ 830 million by the end of the fiscal year next March. With a 1970 gross national product of only $ 50 billion and a population of 560 million, India can scarcely afford such a drain on its economy.

Communal Tensions

Beyond the financial cost, the presence of 9,700,000 refugees threatens to create social turmoil and revive communal tensions. There are 7,000,000 in West Bengal alone, and still they come. The Indian government, moreover, is fearful that many of the refugees, particularly the Hindus who are singled out for persecution by Pakistan's Moslem military, will refuse to return to their homes.

Last March, when the exodus began, thousands of Indians living in the border areas rushed forward to offer assistance. Today the torrent of men, women and children has so excited tensions that armed guards have been placed at the camps, and West Bengal officials are securing relief camps with barbed-wire fencing.

The tensions are caused mainly by the competition for scarce commodities and even scarcer jobs. Inside the camps, to discourage refugees from seeking work, loudspeakers daily warn them not to go into the villages. It is perhaps the sorest point with local residents, who say that the refugees will work for one Rupee (13c) a day when the local rate is between 2½ and three Rupees. Farm labourers, shop assistants and other working district of Nadia, asking local employers not to hire refugees. Residents also complain that the price of kerosene, vegetables and other food has nearly doubled.

Numerous incidents indicate that impoverished local people find it hard to accept even the minimal care given to the refugees. Says farmer Jogen Mandal: "These people are crooks. Each of them has three ration cards. Part of the ration they consume and the rest they sell. They get free medical treatment, and they are much better off than most of us." Replies Bhabendra Nath Roy, former vice-principal of Manirampur College in East Pakistan and now a refugee:

"We know local people do not like our presence here, and clashes are taking place every day. Camp officials deprive us of rations, and if you go to complain officials get help from local people to beat us up."

The Big Problem

While there has so far been a noticeable lack of the bitter Hindu-Muslim religious tensions that resulted in widespread massacres at the time of the 1947 partition, the economic and population strains on West Bengal have become extremely acute. Already suffering from overcrowding and under-employment, the state has never fully recovered economically from the influx of some 4,000,000 predominantly Hindu refugees, who fled to West Bengal when East Bengal chose to become part to Moslem Pakistan in 1947. Ever since, the area has been a fertile ground for political turmoil among terrorist groups, criminals masquerading under political banners, and countless university graduates with no prospect of jobs. But officials, faced with the urgency of caring for so many additional millions, have necessarily shifted other problems into the background. Says Siddhartha Shankar Ray, Mrs. Gandhi's Minister of West Bengal affairs: "My big problem is how to reopen the 2,500 schools that have been closed to house the refugees."

LETTERS PUBLISHED IN THE DAILY STATESMAN

I. The Statesman: December 5, 1971

Sir, — Abul Kalam Khan (December 1-2) is not the only Muslim who supports the cause of Bangladesh. There are many Muslims like him: I myself am one of them. It is true that, partly because of the Indian Government's mistaken policies and partly because of the Muslims' lack of understanding, almost all Indian Muslims once had religious and spiritual links with Pakistan. But things have changed. The Muslims now realise what the rulers of Pakistan are doing. They have redeemed their faults.

After the night of March 25 when Yahya Khan, under cover of darkness, shamelessly unleashed a massacre of the Muslims of Bangladesh, no educated Muslim can support Pakistan any more. I confess there are a number of ignorant Muslims who even now extend their support to Yahya Khan. They do it only because of their ignorance. — Yours etc., Nesar Ahmad, Calcutta.

II. The Statesman, December 5, 1971

Sir, — I fully agree with Mr. Abul Kalam Khan that, if a "Jehad" is essential for Indian Muslims, it is to fight against the Pakistani rulers (December 1-2). But the majority of Indian Muslims support Pakistan because they have a spiritual link with it; only a minority support Bangladesh. Indian Muslims should always support India, even if there were a war with Pakistan. They should remember the saying of the Prophet of Islam : "Love of country is a part of belief". — Yours etc., Syed M. Ali, Calcutta.

III. The Statesman, May 5, 1971

Sir,—I agree with Miss Mahtabunnessa Ali (May 1-2) when she says "Muslims throughout the world are guilty of the barbarity being perpetrated in Bangladesh; their silence is a pointer to true decadence of Islam". Muslims of the whole world should declare that West Pakistan do not believe in God; that is the only way to save Islam from criticism. Mass killing is not allowed by any religion except the "religion" of President Yahya and Adolf Hitler.—Yours etc., Syed M. Ali, Calcutta.

NEWSWEEK December 6, 1971
THE WAR IN BENGAL : INDIA ATTACKS

When nations go to war, they almost invariably claim to be acting out of the purest motives. Last week, as India's leaders met in the high-domed central hall of the New Delhi Parliament, there was much pious table-thumping and

jingoistic rhetoric to justify an attack against Pakistan. "If we have to silence the Pak guns," vowed Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram, "we are not going to stop at the border but go inside Pakistan. We do not care how far inside we have to go if it becomes a matter of our self-defence." With that moral mandate thousands of Indian troops swarmed across the border into East Pakistan—and the stage was set for a third round in the seemingly endless strife between the subcontinent's two arch-enemies.

Inexorably, the two nations appeared to be heading for a wholly unnecessary war, one for which each side would have to shoulder an equal share of guilt. Over the past nine months, the Pakistani Government of President Mohammed Yahya Khan had indiscriminately slaughtered more than a million of its subjects in a cruel and myopic attempt to prevent autonomy for the Bengalis of East Pakistan. And India, under the leadership of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, had launched a calculated campaign to dismember Pakistan, turn its eastern wing into the client state of Bangla Desh and free itself of the burden of caring for nearly 10 million Bengali refugees who had fled Yahya's reign of terror. As one diplomat in New Delhi cynically put it, "What was seen as a liability here a few months ago, is now seen as an opportunity." What made the steady drift toward war even more tragic was that the one man who undoubtedly could stop it—Bengali leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman—was being tried by Pakistan for treason, and Yahya Khan steadfastly refused to free him.

Worse still, none of the world's major powers seemed able—or even very willing—to exert the kind of influence that could stop the conflict. Despite Washington's $4 billion worth of assistance to Pakistan—aid largely designed to maintain leverage with Yahya Khan's government—the U.S. appeared powerless to sway the Pakistani leader. And the Soviet Union, notwithstanding its recently signed friendship treaty with India, had no better luck reining in Mrs. Gandhi. Thus unchecked, the rush to war was on, even though both countries had much to lose by it. "All good Moslems believe they will go to a better reward if they die in battle," sighed a Western diplomat, "and Yahya may just want to go that way." As for India, it seemed determined to risk plunging 20 per cent of the world's population into chaos in order to realise its

long-cherished hope of becoming the unchallenged power on the sub-continent and a giant to rival China for predominance in Asia.

The clash between India and Pakistan had been a long time coming. Like a pair of angry cats, the two armies had been circling and spitting at each other for months before the first lunge came. At scattered points along the 1,300-mile frontier between India and East Pakistan, troops stood poised while each side probed and harassed the other with artillery and mortar barrages, piecemeal sniping and an occasional small fire fight. All the while, the Indian and Pakistani governments loudly accused each other of provocations and self-righteously maintained that they themselves would never be the aggressors. But, in fact, India was preparing to strike. And though New Delhi barred all reporters from border areas to conceal its troop movements, NEWSWEEK'S Senior Editor Arnaud de Borchgrave, along with a correspondent of The New York Times, managed last week to slip through the Indian net. De Borchgrave's report:

There was not a sign of war as we drove the 54 miles from Calcutta to the border town of Bangaon—no military traffic, no Indian Army units, no thudding artillery. When the road turned east, at a sign reading "Pak Border—Two Miles," we followed it until an Indian major stopped us, explaining that the Pakistanis were firing on the road just ahead. The major took us down a roadside ditch toward the border, and though we could hear the tumble of distant shelling and the whistle of an occasional bullet as we walked, the area was still calm. Where is the fighting, we asked, and the major replied : "All quiet on this side. A bit of automatic stuff at night, a few mortar rounds but otherwise no movement." At the border itself, Indian troops were well dug in and sturdy red-brick walls blocked the road. But beyond the walls, a sign was still visible, and it read: "Welcome to Pakistan."

Bound For The Border

But tranquillity suddenly vanished as we were driving back to Bangaon. In choking clouds of red dust, an awesome convoy was churning toward the border. Lumbering Soviet-built trucks towed twelve 105-mm. artillery pieces, turbaned

Sikhs manned a steady stream of jeeps mounted with recoilless guns and cumbersome trailers hauled pontoon-bridge equipment. We slipped in among a seemingly endless procession of trucks, each jammed with soldiers in full combat gear and automatic weapons. Everything from amphibious armoured personnel carriers to furniture for command posts was in the convoy, and it all indicated that the Indian Army was positioning itself for an incursion into Pakistan. Even though we were waved off the road just before the border, the army made no effort to conceal the border-bound caravan or India's intentions. "My men have been waiting to move forward for a month," one officer told us as we joined him for tea. "Their spirits are high."

It was patently obvious from the unceasing convoy as well as from conversation with the field commanders that India, for all its public proclamations to the contrary, was finally lending the Mukti Bahini guerrillas a direct hand. After our observation of the Indian troop movements, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi acknowledged for the first time that her army had been given the go-ahead to cross the Pakistani border "in self-defence." But in fact, India's tactics were more like the doctrine of "hot pursuit." For even before we saw the convoy, Indian forces had crossed the border north of Bangaon and destroyed thirteen Pakistani tanks. And, in another clear indication that India was stepping up its involvement in the battle for Bengal, an Indian Cabinet minister told me: "There is no time now for interim or compromise solutions. Speed is now essential."

For the time being, however, India refrained from mounting an all out offensive. Instead, New Delhi's tactics seemed designed to tie down large numbers of Pakistani troops with a series of quick, limited strikes and thereby pave the way for the Bengali guerrillas to seize control of more territory. To that end, the Indians reportedly thrust into the districts of Sylhet, Comilla and the Chittagong Hills along the eastern border, as well as pushing in from the west towards Jessore. Lying in the midst of a rich agricultural plain, Jessore is regarded as a key city in the rebels' plan to take over East Pakistan, and India's offensive seemed to be aimed at speeding up that timetable. With the area around the city in Indian and Mukti Bahini hands, NEWSWEEK'S Tony Clifton flew into Jessore on a Pakistani Air Force plane and cabled this report:

It is obvious that the Indians are using regular troops, tanks and heavy guns to make incursions into Pakistan's territory. In fact, when I flew into Jessore, Indian soldiers still held a salient of land west of Jessore and had the city's airport under sporadic fire. I was quickly hustled off to the Pakistani headquarters where Maj.-Gen. M. H. Ansari the sector commander, described the Indian attack: "They came in strength, two brigades supported by a tank regiment and artillery fire from 130-mm. Russian guns. They pushed in about 6 miles. That was too much, so we counter-attacked and pushed them back almost to the border." When I asked if the attackers could have been Bengali guerrillas, Ansari scoffed. "These weren't rebels. They were using tanks and heavy guns and the rebels haven't got that sort of weaponry. Those things don't grow on trees." He paused and added, somewhat wistfully, "Although I wish they did because then we'd get some too."

A Thankless Task

Ansari claimed that his forces had killed some 200 to 300 enemy soldiers and added: "We captured uniforms and papers which showed they were regular Indian troops. They came from the Fourteenth Punjab Regiment." While refusing to say how many of his own men had been killed, he admitted that casualties were substantial: "They weren't throwing rose petals at us, you know". Even though Ansari said that he had driven the Indians back toward the border, no Pakistani official denies that the area surrounding Jessore is effectively in enemy hands. And wresting any part of East Pakistan back from a guerrilla force will be a thankless task for the army. Although the monsoons have ended, vast areas of land are still covered with water, and literally hundreds of rivers and streams crisscross the terrain. The few roads that do exist are puny tracks, all highly vulnerable to guerrilla attack.

An equal threat to the government exists on the opposite side of East Pakistan in the Comilla district. I flew into a Pakistani headquarters near the town of Brahmanbaria where army officers charged that Indian troops had mounted a major battle. The Pakistani commander led me to a rail-

road truck piled high with dead bodies and showed off the weapons he had captured. While there was no way for me to tell whether the decomposing bodies were those of Bengali guerrillas or Indian regulars, the rifles, automatic weapons and light machine guns were undeniably of those types used by the Indian Army. The brigadier had no doubts that his enemies were Indians, and he was almost gleeful when he described the battle. "We killed between 300 and 400 men, with three times that many wounded," he crowed. "We destroyed the Nineteenth Punjab Battalion and badly mauled another."

The brigadier's bloodthirsty attitude was thoroughly typical of the feelings that Pakistanis and Indians have for each other. For the two states have been uneasy and often hostile neighbours since they were carved out of British-ruled India in 1947. The surgery that created Pakistan as a bifurcated Moslem state divided by 1,000 miles of Hindu India was hardly performed before countless thousands of people were slaughtered in the indescribably bloody "partition riots." And although the festering hatreds born of differing religions and customs were kept leashed for much of the following quarter century, the open warfare that broke out between India and Pakistan over Kashmir in 1948-49 and again in 1965 ensured that the mutual antagonisms would not die.

Nor is the India-Pakistan enmity the only hostility that scars the troubled sub-continent. Just as much antagonism exists between Pakistan's two principal races—the Punjabis who dominate West Pakistan and control both government and army, and the Bengalis of East Pakistan who bitterly resented the west's economic exploitation of their prosperous agricultural land and their status as a subjugated people. When the Bengalis rallied behind Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in last December's national election, they won a clear majority of seats in the nation's parliament. But Yahya Khan postponed the parliamentary opening, provoking a general strike and murderous Bengali rioting in East Pakistan. Yahya's response was brutal. He loosed the Punjabi army on the East in a terror campaign that eventually took the lives of more than 1 million Bengalis and drove 9.8 million into exile in India. And, however, unwittingly, he brought his country and India to the brink of war.

India Holds The Cards

For Pakistan, a head-on collision with India would likely verge on catastrophe. With India's armed forces more than double Pakistan's (980,000 men against 392,000) and its air force totalling 615 combat aircraft as opposed to 285 Pakistani planes, New Delhi holds a heavy statistical advantage. But beyond that, the weather, political geography and the Mukti Bahini have all combined to give India a virtually fail-safe position. The winter snows have closed off the Himalayan passes, thereby reducing the danger of a Communist Chinese attack in support of Pakistan; in fact, so confident is India that its Chinese border is safe that it recently repositioned some of its mountain troops along the Pakistani borders. Moreover, Yahya Khan, faces a logistical nightmare trying to resupply his forces, separated from each other by East Pakistan's waterlogged terrain and from the West by India itself. Most important, Yahya's 80,000 troops in East Pakistan must fight two enemies at once—the Indians in front and the increasingly menacing Bengali guerrillas in the rear.

Indeed, the two-front nature of the fighting forms the nucleus of India's current strategy. For months, Mrs. Gandhi's government trained and equipped the Mukti Bahini. But seeing no sign that Yahya Khan would agree to autonomy for the East, and bleeding to death economically from the cost of caring for the refugees, India upped the ante. "They couldn't afford to let the Mukti Bahini rebellion mature at its own rate," a diplomat explained, "so they decided to telescope the process." The incursions were the result, and last week, as Mrs. Gandhi began a series of visits to border troops, New Delhi abounded with rumours of further dramatic escalation.

While the Indians and Pakistanis were trading bullets and talking of a larger war to come, the rest of the world was merely talking. Despite the fact that they had supplied both the arms and the money to fuel the fighting, the world's major powers seemed unable to stop the conflict. Russia, which has supplanted the West as India's premier armourer, confined itself mainly to low-key tongue-clicking in Pravda, perhaps because Moscow feels it is backing the eventual winner. Military conflict, the Pravda article said, "would cause dire human and material sacrifice and would cause

further difficulties in the long run". And the People's Republic of China—a principal supporter of Pakistan's cause —concentrated chiefly on bawling out the Soviets.

Nobody Is Listening

Nowhere was the impotence of a major power more evident than in Washington. Although the Nixon Administration called on the combatants to show restraint, the pleas fell on deaf ears. In India, where anger at the fact that the U.S. continued arms shipments to Pakistan until a month ago still runs high, a senior official bristled at the U.S. request: "We got the pats on the back for our restraint and they got the arms," he snapped. "You say you're putting pressure on the Pakistanis. We say you're trying to eat the cake and keep it." Nor did the U.S. meet with any greater success in Islamabad. For all his reliance on U.S. support, Yahya resolutely clung to the view that Pakistan could be saved without the release of Mujib and without buckling under to the Mukti Bahini.

Given Yahya's intransigence and the increasingly provocative Indian border crossings, it was difficult to see how full scale war could be avoided. Indeed, many foreign military attaches in New Delhi predicted that Jessore would fall to the Mukti Bahini by the end of this week—thus setting the scene for the proclamation of an independent Bangla Desh and, perhaps, a retaliatory declaration of war by Pakistan against India. If that should happen the sub-continent would be engulfed in a more punishing conflict than any it has ever seen. For unlike past wars between India and Pakistan, this might well decide the ultimate fate of one of the antagonists. "The birth-pangs of Bangla Desh will signal the death-throes of Pakistan as we have known it," said one American diplomat. "Yahya knows that. His army knows it. And they won't go down without putting up one hell of a fight."

Why India Won't Risk Peace

If India fails to provoke Pakistan into an all-out war, it surely will not be for lack of trying. True enough, no one seriously believed that New Delhi had precipitated problems

in East Pakistan where none had existed before. But neither did anyone doubt that the Indians had sought to take every possible advantage of the crisis from the beginning. Nor was there any question but what with the "opportunity of a lifetime," as one Indian politician described it, now in hand, New Delhi would risk everything to transform its dream of a weak, dismembered Pakistan into a reality.

As most Indians saw it, there was really no other choice. With the bills for refugee care soaring astronomically, officials in New Delhi were convinced that a full-scale war would be far cheaper than being stuck with the refugee problem for even one more year. And they even produced the figures to prove it. By next March, according to official estimates, the refugees will have cost the Indian government $900 million—or more than thirteen times the cost of the entire 1965 war with Pakistan. In short, if the current crisis dragged on, the financial drain on the Indian budget might well become unbearable. Indeed, what the Indians seemed to fear most was a Palestinian-style denouement—in which the government would have to contend with both the refugees and a continuing and costly standoff with hostile Pakistani forces in East Bengal. "We have accepted the risk of war," said one Indian official, "because we believed the risks to India of letting things go on as they have been are far greater than the risks of war."

That kind of attitude has confronted Pakistan's Mohammed Yahya Khan with a painful dilemma: whether to accept defeat and proceed with a humiliating withdrawal from East Pakistan or to risk initiating a devastating war himself. Given the dismal alternatives, Yahya has understandably tried to carve out a more favourable position somewhere in between. Under pressure from Pakistan's so-called "22 families" (the nation's most powerful business leaders, who originally favoured the crackdown on the Bengali rebellion to preserve their investments in the east but who now fear losses at home due to protracted war), Yahya has even begun to talk of compromise—privately suggesting the possibility of a plebiscite in the east. As one U.S. diplomat explained it: "It's obvious that Yahya is beginning to understand some things he missed a few months ago."

On Trial For Treason

But it may already be too late for Yahya Khan to salvage an acceptable compromise. For despite his apparent willingness to haggle, he remains unwilling to make the only concessions that would seem to appeal to New Delhi: the release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and negotiations for an independent Bangla Desh. Still on trial for treason, Mujib remains in jail in the Punjab town of Layallpur. And Yahya is by no means ready to accept the humiliation of Bengali independence just yet. As the Indian pressure has escalated, in fact, Yahya has stiffened too—talking very much like a man who knows a fight is coming. "If she (Mrs. Gandhi) wants war," he declared last week, "then I will give it to her. If that woman thinks she is going to cow me, I refuse to take it."

If all-out war comes, most people expect the Pakistanis to trigger it with a strike into Kashmir or across India's western plains. An escalation of the conflict by that degree, the Pakistanis were said to believe, might be enough to force the U.N. Security Council to take up the crisis and perhaps even to implement a U.N. supervised cease-fire along the entire Indo-Pakistani border. But that ploy seemed doomed from the beginning. For one thing, great-power rivalries over the sub-continent appeared significant enough to forestall any U.N. action at the moment. For another, a Pakistani attack would give the more powerful Indian Army the excuse it has been waiting for to deal Yahya's forces a decisive defeat.

No matter what short-term tactics Yahya chose, in other words, Pakistan ultimately seemed on the way out of the eastern zone. Nonetheless, no one was suggesting that India had any ideas of annexing the territory. For while the predominantly Moslem rebels were more than willing to accept help from India's Hindus across the border, they would undoubtedly look with a much colder eye on Indian efforts to bring about a full political take-over. In fact, India appeared likely to inherit enough troubles just by acquiring an independent Bangla Desh on its doorstep to discourage any thoughts of bringing it into the Indian fold.

An international welfare case even in its palmiest days, East Bengal is in worse shape than usual as a result of the current tumult. Its rickety communications network and

minuscule industrial base have been all but destroyed. The region will plainly need massive infusions of Indian money and materials to get back even minimal stability. Without that aid, Bangla Desh could collapse into anarchy and become a focal point for Marxist radicalism on the sub-continent. Finally, though social scientists on both sides of the border discounted the theory, some government officials in New Delhi still feared that an independent Bengali state would fan the flames of India's own separatist movement in adjacent West Bengal.

From the Indian point of view, however, there was no question that an independent Bangla Desh would do far more good than harm. For starters, it would allow New Delhi at least to ease the refugee problem somewhat. In the long run, the re-establishment of traditional trading patterns between East and West Bengal should hold some economic benefits for India. But most important of all the breakup of Pakistan would assure India's undisputed supremacy on the sub-continent. For with the loss of an estimated 60 per cent of its population, 50 per cent of its foreign exchange and 20 per cent of its tax revenue, Pakistan seemed likely to present little in the way of a sustained military threat to the New Delhi government and appeared destined to wind up with just about as much diplomatic clout as that wielded by neighbouring Afghanistan.

China's Influence

With the Pakistani counterweight safely out of the way, India would no doubt also seek to flex its political muscles beyond the limits of the sub-continent. Particularly in Asia, Mrs. Gandhi & Co. have their sights set on chiselling away at Peking's preponderant influence. The Indians have long resented playing diplomatic second fiddle to their Chinese rivals, and in view of the international attention lavished upon the Chinese, the Foreign Office in New Delhi is smarting more than ever. "Why is Nixon treating China like a big power?" complained one Indian political scientist: "Because they have nuclear weapons? In 1960, we were as advanced as China in these weapons but we chose not to go on, in the interest of everyone. And now we are treated like step-children." Obviously, even without nuclear weapons, India hopes to change that relationship soon.

The U.S. itself faces an uphill fight to improve its own relations with South Asia. For in supporting the Pakistanis in the latest upheaval, however reluctantly, Washington clearly seems to have bet on the wrong team. As one American diplomat put it last week: "If there's an all-out war, the Indians will see us as being against them and the Paks will think we've betrayed them. Only the Russians have done their maths right. They know that any way you add West Pakistan's 60 million and the East's 80 million, it doesn't equal India's 550 million." Indeed, next to India, the Soviet Union appeared likely to be the big winner in the battle for East Bengal. In fact, some people were predicting that Moscow would parley its support for India into vastly increased influence on the subcontinent and all around the Indian Ocean. But while the Russians have plainly enhanced their standing in the area, that assessment seemed a bit overdrawn. For throughout the current crisis, Mrs. Gandhi has resolutely steered her own course—neither asking for nor accepting direction from any quarter. And with India riding high, there seemed to be little reason to suspect that the headstrong Prime Minister was about to begin listening to outsiders now.

No Place Worse Than Home

These days, the telephone in P.N. Luthra's modest, third-floor flat in Calcutta starts jangling at 6 each morning. And with the first ring Luthra, a 54 year old retired army colonel who is responsible for coordinating India's relief program for Bengali refugees, is jolted awake by one of the seemingly endless series of problems that confront him daily. The first caller on a recent morning informed him that the Indian territory of Tripura, abutting East Pakistan's Comilla district, had received only 45 freight-car loads of food the previous day instead of its normal allotment of 67. Rushing to his makeshift office in the Calcutta branch of the Labour Ministry, Luthra ordered food stocks diverted from "a little reserve I have managed to build up in Assam." But when an aide found the phone connections to Assam so bad that he could not make himself understood, a telegraphed order had to be sent instead. "It will take 24 hours to get there," Luthra muttered helplessly. "I won't even receive confirmation for another 48 hours."



Mukti Bahini Guerrillas hunting snipers.
Photo : Kishor Parekh.


December 6, 197
INDIA ATTACKS
The Battle for Bengal



Bengali boy caught in crossfire.
Time : 20-12-71.



Pakistanis fire final charges before retreat in East.
Time : 20-12-71.



INDIAN TROOPS ADVANCE TOWARD PAKISTAN FROM RAJASTHAN

Bangladesh: Out of War, a Nation Is Born

Time : 20-12-71.



Pakistani soldiers in retreat in East Bengal.
Time : 20-12-71.

And so the problems mounted through the day. According to Indian Government figures, 9.8 million Bengali refugees have already fled to India and some 12,000 more stagger across the 1,300-mile-long East Pakistani border every day. Among other things, they create a mind-boggling logistical puzzle for Luthra and his 280-man staff. With the onset of winter, some 4 million blankets must be distributed immediately in the colder districts near the Himalayan foothills, but fewer than a half million have arrived from abroad. Another 5,000 wells for drinking water have to be drilled in West Bengal to supplement the 6,000 already sunk. Concerned with reports that perhaps 30 per cent of the drug supplies and 15 per cent of the foodstuffs earmarked for the refugees vanish before reaching the 1,000 camps India now maintains, Luthra recently decreed: "We must tighten security." But an aide disagreed. "The more we tighten up," he argued, "the more bottlenecks we'll have. Speed is more important now than trying to prevent the inevitable pilfering that goes on."

Yeoman Service

In fact, for all the snarls, the Indian relief workers have performed yeoman service. At the sprawling Salt Lake camp near Calcutta's Dum Dum Airport, a new hospital staffed by sixteen doctors has helped to drastically cut the death rate among the camp's estimated 50,000 children to an average of only three a day. In addition the children at the camp now attend an open-air school under the direction of 110 teachers who are themselves refugees from East Pakistan. Salt Lake's population consumes some 200 truckloads of food and supplies a day—which amounts to a daily ration of 10·5 ounces of rice, 3.5 ounces of wheat and 3.5 ounces of wheat and 3.5 ounces of vegetables per person. Children also get a pint of milk per day plus a multiple vitamin pill under a supplementary feeding program to cure the malnutrition that afflicted most of them when they first crossed the border.

To be sure, the Salt Lake camp is reputed to be a "showplace." And there, as in the other, 150 camps that foreign reporters are permitted to visit, it is not the least bit uncommon for ten families, or about 50 people, to huddle under a single tent measuring 50 by 24 feet. Babies are scattered all

over the place, crying and vomiting, and the overpowering stench of human waste pervades the camp from one end to the other. The conditions seem intolerable, but the refugees endure because, unbelievable as it may seem, many of them never even had it this "good" in the Bengali villages whence they came. At most camps, all a refugee has to do is to look over to an adjoining Indian village, sometimes only 300 yards away, to see that, thanks to the relief program, he usually gets more to eat and receives better medical care than does the local Indian population.

Resentment

Understandably, the impression that the refugees are getting favoured treatment from the Indian Government has bred resentment among the locals. When a human tidal wave of 200,000 East Bengali refugees suddenly inundated the frontier village of Balat in India's Meghalaya state for example, Luthra's relief workers hastily organised a 400-bed hospital and dispatched a mobile X-ray unit, an electrical generator and surgical instruments there. Balat's 3,000 permanent inhabitants, most of whom had never even seen a hospital before, marvelled at the attention showered on the newcomers and, naturally enough, began asking why they were not treated at the new hospitals too. Similarly in Calcutta, where no fewer than 500,000 of the teeming city's 8 million people are jobless and where 70 per cent of the families subsist on about $ 12 a month, there are bitter complaints that refugees have been offering their services for 1 Rupee a day, instead of the going daily wage of 3 Rupees for unskilled labourers. Only stern measures by the authorities have thus far prevented wholesale rioting between Calcutta's slum dwellers and the equally impoverished refugees in their desperate scramble for any sort of paying jobs.

These social strains and the staggering financial burden of refugee relief seem more than India can possibly bear. Estimates indicate that the program will have cost $ 900 million by next March, of which only $ 250 million has been offset by donations and pledges from abroad. Fully 16 per cent of India's current national budget is now eaten up in refugee relief, and the country's food-stocks, painstakingly built up over two good crop years as a cushion against leaner times,

are fast dwindling. Special taxes have been levied, and the government has cut back drastically on all other spending areas, even to the extent of shelving of long-planned development programs. "We cannot even reckon how much the refugees will cost us in '72, an Indian official told Newsweek's Arnaud de Borchgrave, "because the prospect is too horrentous to contemplate."

Nightmares

But contemplate it India must because there is growing evidence that many of the refugees have no intention of returning to East Pakistan—not even to an independent Bangla Desh. Some 80 per cent of the refugee population is composed of Hindus who have been the special targets in the Pakistani Army's bloody repressions, and now that they are in India many wonder why their parents failed to take them out of Moslem-dominated Bengal when the sub-continent was partitioned in 1947. Despite efforts to convince them that a new Bangla Desh will be a secular state with equal rights for all, few of the Hindus seem persuaded that a return to their disaster-prone villages in East Bengal is preferable to the nascent welfare state of the refugee camps. Key Indian officials told de Borchgrave, however, that unless the refugees are "unloaded very soon, Indian troops may have to drive them back home at bayonet point." Such a prospect conjures up nightmares in New Delhi and, without doubt, is a major factor behind India's current effort to resolve the Bangla Desh crisis quickly through military pressure.

'Wonderful Job'

Although its "President," Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, is currently being tried for treason by the Pakistani Government, the self-proclaimed nation of Bangla Desh has set up a four-man government led by "Acting President" Syed Nazrul Islam. Recently, in the first interview he has granted any journalist, Syed Nazrul Islam talked with NEWSWEEK'S Senior Editor Arnaud de Borchgrave. Below, excerpts:

On The Rebels' Campaign

My boys have done a wonderful job. We are now well-organised and effective. The people's sense of patriotism is also an excellent source of military intelligence; all the educated people are on our side. I don't think it will take much longer. You have seen for yourself, both in occupied and liberated areas, the support we enjoy.

On Outside Influence

It is entirely our own show, and there is no pressure from India of any kind....The Communists are supporting us and have pledged explicit loyalty to my government. But they are not a big factor.

On The United States

The U.S. press has spelled out the basic issues. The story is now known. As a result, your Congress is supporting us, too. But we cannot understand why the U.S. Government is against us.

On An End To Fighting

If Yahya has the foresight to see that independence is inevitable, then we can negotiate the details of withdrawal without bloodshed. First, he must release Mujib, then recognise independence. Fighting can then stop and troops be withdrawn. If Yahya Khan wants a settlement and a peaceful transfer of power, then all he has to do is release Mujib. If he doesn't want a peaceful transfer, then we will fight to the bitter end.

BENGAL'S ELITE DEAD IN A DITCH

By Nicholas Tomalin From Dacca

BEFORE THEY surrendered at Dacca on Thursday, the Pakistani Army arrested and then shot more than 50 of the city's surviving intellectuals, scientists and businessmen. It was a closely planned elimination of elite Bengali citizens, carried out as a sudden military operation. It must therefore have been done with the full knowledge of the Pakistan high command, including the commanding officer, General Niazi.

The discovery of the bodies can only increase tension in Dacca, make revenge killings and riots more likely, and possibly even cause friction between the Mukti Bahini guerrillas and the Indian Army.

If the occupying forces have to clamp down on the liberated Bengalis, they could come to resent even Indian occupation; and there are small signs of this ominous development already in Dacca.

The murdered intellectuals were discovered in some isolated clay pits on the outskirts of the town, at a place called Rayar Bazar. I actually saw 35 bodies there, in a decomposed condition which indicates they were killed four or five days ago. There are probably many more and from kidnap reports, some in Dacca are putting the number of killed as high as 150.

UPI reports that among the victims were Dr. F. Rabbi, chief cardiologist of Dacca Medical College, and Dr. Munier Chowdhury, head of the Department of Bengali Language at Dacca University.

The killing ground is a brick-field beyond the middle-class Dacca district of Danmondi. It is an oddly desolate place, despite the water hyacinths which float on the bluey-white clay pools.

Hundreds of Dacca citizens came here today, walking along the mud dykes to view the bodies, many of them looking for their own relatives.

The kidnapping was apparently done early in the morning last Tuesday, when squads of Punjabi soldiers drove to selected addresses, and took away men and women under armed guard. Probably they were taken to the Rayar Bazar brickfields and immediately shot, lined up along the mud dykes so as to fall into the pools.

There they still lie, with clay dust on them, beginning to decompose. There is one skeleton on a dyke picked dramatically bare by the Dacca dogs.

The Bengali crowds are circulating among these pools in a strange, gentle fashion. They don't seem angry here. Elsewhere they are wild. But here they were walking, talking in a gentle murmur, like tourists in a cathedral.

At one pool there was a particular large crowd, and the biggest pile of corpses. Here a Moslem, his mouth wrapped in his wool scarf, was howling and keening. It sounded like the muezzin call to prayer.

We asked the man his name. He said he was Abdul Malik, a Dacca businessman. In the water before him he had recognised the bodies of his three brothers, Badruzzaman, Shahjahan, and Mulluk Jahan. They lay side by side. They too were Dacca businessmen. It was a family firm. He had no other brothers.

"The Pak army came for them at seven o'clock in the morning on Tuesday," he said. "Just by chance, I had gone out early."

At this moment my companion began to cry. He was a Dacca student, named Najiur Rahman, who brought me to the brick-fields. He was looking for his brother-in-law.

Dr. Aminuddin is head of the Bengal Research Laboratories, with an Oxford Ph. D, and he was last seen at 7 o'clock on Tuesday morning when the Pakistan army took him away.

"I'm sorry, I must leave you, and look," said Rahman. His woollen scarf was now also around his face.

I was in Dacca for only three hours yesterday and during that time the news had scarcely spread. The crowds were excited but quite good-natured, still waving to Indian troops and racing up and down in cars.

But there has been a great deal of shooting, particularly at night. Correspondents at the Intercontinental Hotel confirm that the atmosphere is explosive. The Bengalis allege that the hated Biharis, those "foreigners" from across the border who long ago came to settle here because they were Muslims, have been helping the Pakistani troops to murder Bengalis.

This was precisely what led to a riot and massacre of Bihari civilians in Jessore when I was there eight months ago.

This murder of Dacca intellectuals is infinitely worse than anything that happened at Jessore. Therefore some kind of retribution is almost inevitable.

Apart from swiftly gathered hearsay in Dacca, and the evidence of other journalists in Dacca that such killings have been taking place, I can offer only the evidence of the two boys who drove me back to Dacca airport.

Both were Mukti Bahini. One, Parvez Mamasalek, told me proudly he had been Bihari-hunting the day before.

"We heard shooting," he said. "We knew it was those Bihari bastards killing our boys. We closed in on them in a circle. Two of us with stens rushed into their house." The Biharis had climbed a tree in the garden. They shot them down like crows from a branch. "Of course, we kill them, they killed us."

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

MRS. GANDHI: MUJIB MUST BE FREED

By Nicholas Carroll

IN THE FIRST exclusive interview she has given since the Indo-Pakistan war began, Mrs. Gandhi told me yesterday that she has no doubt that India and Pakistan will establish a friendly relationship. She is convinced that there can be stability in the Indian sub-continent "if outsiders didn't interfere."

These were my questions and her replies:—

CARROLL: You have carried out your declared objectives regarding Bangladesh. You have made it clear that India has no territorial ambitions. How long will it be before the last Indian Army unit will be withdrawn from Bangladesh?

Mrs. Gandhi: It is very difficult to say at this stage. It depends largely on the Bangladesh Government. We certainly hope it will be very soon.

You are thinking in terms of weeks or months?

I cannot say anything at this stage because things are too chaotic just now. There is also the question of the safety of many people there. We have no obligation in that regard, to non-Bengalis, and so on. I think the Indian Army can help in this at this moment.

Can you repeat categorically that India has no wish to acquire any territory from West Pakistan?

I thought I had said it very categorically in my public meetings and in statements to Parliament, that we do not have any territorial ambitions there.

And this applies also to territory which Pakistan occupies and which you consider belongs rightly to India?

We have said that we will not take that by force. But, as you know, we not only believe, but it has been proved, that the cease-fire line is rather erratic, and has not helped to keep the peace. But this Government hasn't considered this matter afresh, or anything like that.

Bangladesh needs her leader, Sheikh Mujibur, very badly. What is India doing to secure his release? What pressures can you apply?

I don't think we can put many pressures. We have appealed to all the world governments through our embassies, and I have written personally to everybody, I think. We sincerely hope that they will exert some pressure. I saw this morning that the American Government is claiming some credit for the cease-fire, so I hope that they will look at this aspect also.

But you do hold a kind of hostage for him, in the form of the Pakistani prisoners of war in the East. Is this likely to play some part of the negotiation?

I really can't say anything about negotiations, because we just don't know how they will take place or what will happen.

What kind of relationship do you think India can eventually establish with West Pakistan?

I have never had any doubt that we will establish a very friendly relationship. I think it is unfortunate that they have

had certain governments that have come in the way of such friendship. But I have no doubt that amongst the people of Pakistan there is friendly feeling for us. Whenever anybody has gone for any purpose—they allow the Sikhs to go sometimes for something, and in the past a sports team has been very warmly welcomed—we can see this.

In India you will have seen there is no hatred whatsoever for Pakistan, none at all. There, of course, they do have a hate campaign in the newspapers, and, I am told (though I can't vouch for it), even their educational programmes.

As soon as the people of Pakistan realise what is in their own interest—I am not saying that friendship with India is in their interest in that sense, but it is in their interest to be involved in what is happening in our country, in its development —once they look at it from that angle, if we co-operate, then both of us are that much stronger and more capable of dealing with our very difficult problems.

You, sound reasonably hopeful.

I am just an optimistic person, I think.

You have reproached Mr. Nixon for his failure to understand India's position with regard to Bangladesh and the refugees, and as a result your relations with the United States are very strained. Assuming that you want to see them improved as quickly as possible, what specific action would you like to see Mr. Nixon take?

Well, you mentioned one of them—the release of Sheikh Mujib. They have to accept the reality of the situation in Bangladesh. They have to accept the reality of the situation in Pakistan, too. A distant country cannot bolster up, or interfere in, the internal affairs of other countries. It may suit you to support any particular government, but the question is: does it suit the people of the land concerned? And if it doesn't, then that government can never be a strong government, no matter how many armies are behind it. It is not our affair; it is their affair. It is Pakistan's affair.

India's relations with Britain appear excellent at present. Is there anything in particular you feel Britain could do, either with regard to the United States, the United Nations, the Commonwealth, or in Asia, to help stability in this region?

As I said before, I am convinced that there would be stability and peace if outsiders didn't interfere. Britain has not interfered recently, but you have interfered previously. Part of this situation arose because of that—not just your interference, but other people's interference generally.

Do you believe that we are well aware of your anxieties on this point?

Yes, I think you are aware of them.

Would you welcome early recognition by us of Bangladesh?

The Bangladesh people would welcome it.

Do you feel it would help things internationally for us to recognise them?

Yes, I think it will. It is a good thing for Bangladesh to feel they have friends.

Did you discuss Soviet recognition of Bangladesh with Mr. Kuznetzov when he was in Delhi this week?

No, we didn't discuss that kind of thing. But we certainly hope that more and more countries will recognise Bangladesh.

Would you think it undesirable for there to be a rush of the Socialist countries only to recognise Bangladesh with the rest of us lagging behind?

Well, I wouldn't put it that way. I think the more that other countries recognise them, the more self-confident they will feel, and the easier it will be for them to go ahead in dealing with all the problems that face them now. They will need a lot of help, not only from India, but from all around.

We know from our own experience that freedom opens a door, but the main task comes afterwards.

Nicholas Carroll footnote: *Mrs. Gandhi was speaking to me in the administrative buildings in Delhi, known as South Block, where she has one of her two offices.*

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BANGLA DESH: OUT OF WAR, A NATION IS BORN

"Jai Bangla; Jai Bangla:" From the banks of the great Ganges and the broad Brahmaputra, from the emerald fields and mustard-coloured hills of the countryside, from the countless squares of countless villages came the cry: "Victory to Bengal, Victory to Bengal". They danced on the roofs of buses and marched down city streets singing their anthem Golden Bengal. They brought the green, red and gold banner of Bengal out of secret hiding places to flutter freely from buildings, while huge pictures of their imprisoned leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, sprang up overnight on trucks, houses and signposts. As Indian troops advanced first to Jessore, then to Comilla, then to the outskirts of the capital of Dacca, small children clambered over their trucks and Bengalis everywhere cheered and greeted the soldiers as liberators.

Thus last week, amid a war that still raged on, the new nation of Bangla Desh was born. So far only India and Bhutan have formally recognised it, but it ranks eighth among the world's 148 nations in terms of population (78 million), behind China, India, the Soviet Union, the U.S., Indonesia, Japan and Brazil. Its birth, moreover, may be followed by grave complications. In West Pakistan, a political upheaval is a foregone conclusion in the wake of defeat and dismemberment. In India, the creation of a Bengali state next door to its own impoverished West Bengal state could very well strengthen the centrifugal forces that have tugged at the country since independence in 1947.

The breakaway of Pakistan's eastern wing became a virtual certainty when the Islamabad government launched air strikes against at least eight Indian airfields two weeks ago. Responding in force, the Indian air force managed to wipe out the Pakistani air force in the East within two days, giving India control of the skies. In the Bay of Bengal and the Ganges delta region as well, the Indian navy was in unchallenged command. Its blockade of Chittagong

and Chalna harbours cut off all reinforcements, supplies and chances of evacuation for the Pakistani forces, who found themselves far outnumbered (80,000 vs. India's 200,000) and trapped in an enclave more than 1,000 miles from their home bases in the West.

There were even heavier and bloodier battles, including tank clashes on the Punjabi plain and in the deserts to the south, along the 1,400-mile border between India and the western wing of Pakistan, where the two armies have deployed about 250,000 men. Civilians were fleeing from the border areas, and residents of Karachi, Rawalpindi and Islamabad were in a virtual state of siege and panic over day and night harassment raids by buzzing Indian planes.

The U.N. did its best to stop the war, but its best was not nearly good enough. After three days of procedural wrangles and futile resolutions, the Security Council gave up stymied by the Soviet "nyets," the council passed the buck to the even wordier and less effectual General Assembly. There, a resolution calling for a ceasefire and withdrawal of Indian and Pakistani forces behind their own borders swiftly passed by an overwhelming vote of 104 to 11.

The Pakistanis, with their armies in retreat, said they would honour the ceasefire provided India did. The Indians, with victory in view, said they "were considering" the ceasefire, which meant they would stall until they had achieved their objective of dismembering Pakistan. There was nothing the assembly could do to enforce its will. There was considerable irony in India's reluctance to obey the U.N. resolution in view of New Delhi's irritating penchant in the past for lecturing other nations on their moral duty to do the bidding of the world organisation. Similarly, the Soviet Union, which is encouraging India in its defiance, has never hesitated to lecture Israel on its obligation to heed U.N. resolutions calling for withdrawal from Arab territories.

Hopeless Task

In any case, a ceasefire is not now likely to alter the military situation in the East. As Indian infantrymen advanced to within 25 miles of Dacca late last week and as reports circulated that 5,000 Indian paratroopers were landing on the edges of the beleaguered eastern capital, thousands